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THORNTON KELLY TYSON

PIONEER HOME MISSIONARY

BY
BRADY ANTOINE LOVING



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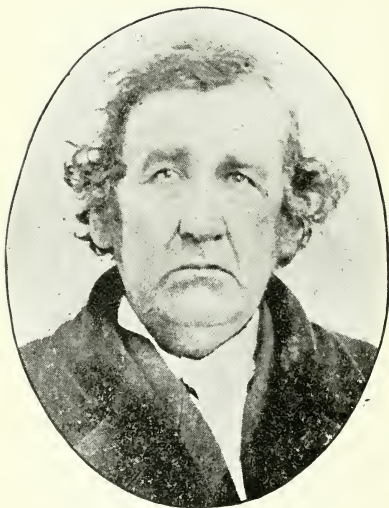
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REV. THORNTON KELLY TYSON





OLIVER NELSON TYSON

FATHER OF T. K. TYSON.

Thornton Kelly Tyson

Pioneer Home Missionary

By
Brady Antoine Loving

With a Foreword

By
Alonzo M. Petty, D. D.

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PREFACE

Many years ago when Rev. Thornton Kelly Tyson, our Missionary, was one day visiting in our little frontier home, I suggested to him that his life-story should be written, as it would be a great blessing to the world. With a merry glint of the eye he said that his biography would read like an Indian song he once heard at an association. "The Indian sang," he continued, "in weird monotonous tones, and when the words of the song were interpreted they were like this:

'Go-go-go-go-go,
Go-go-go-go-go,
Go-go-go-go-go,
Go-go-go-go-go.'

"Now there were seven stanzas, and they were all exactly like this, so it will hardly be necessary for me to repeat them! That is the way with my life. In response to the Great Commission, I just 'Go-go-go-go-go.' There are several stanzas of it, but as they are all like the first it will not be interesting or profitable to repeat them."

Some years later he requested me to write the history of the Northwestern Baptist Association of

Oklahoma. I said in reply: "The history of this association is so closely interwoven with your life that I cannot write it without writing your biography. If you will furnish me with some data I desire I will write the *music of your life with some interesting variations!*" So he wrote at different times a number of articles which I published under the caption of "Pioneering in Oklahoma," in *The Northwestern Baptist*, a small monthly paper of which I was editor. From this beginning, and from some suggestions made in a conversation with Brother Tyson a few months prior to his death, I conceived the purpose which has materialized in the form of this memorial volume.

A short time after the passing away of our beloved Tyson, a communication from Dr. Howard B. Grose strengthened our purpose. He said: "Dear Mr. Loving: By all means write the story of Mr. Tyson and Oklahoma. It ought to go into a booklet of the Home Mission Society." Our conviction was further re-enforced by the following, from Dr. Bruce Kinney: "I am glad you are at work on a biographical sketch of Brother T. K. Tyson, for no man is more worthy to have his deeds preserved to posterity." And many like words of encouragement from various sources have stimulated us in the performance of this most pleasant task. So, after many unavoidable delays, the book, unpretentious and far from perfect, of course, but bearing the earmarks of honest effort and accompanied

with the sincere prayer that somehow it may, like its illustrious subject, be a blessing to mankind, is now sent forth.

The writer is greatly indebted to Dr. H. L. Morehouse, Dr. Bruce Kinney, Rev. L. W. Marks, *The Word and Way*, *The Pacific Baptist*, *The Watchman-Examiner*, *The Standard*, Dr. Alonzo M. Petty, Mrs. T. K. Tyson and family, and a great host of other friends and relatives, for valuable material which they have so kindly sent us. We thank them one and all.

This little book is not published with the thought of personal gain, but with the hope that it may be used of God to preserve, and give to the world, a permanent record of the precious life-story of one of His most worthy servants, and thereby perpetuate not only the memory but the influence of that life in the life of many who never had the pleasure of his personal acquaintance. We have resolved that whatever profits may accrue from the sale of this book shall be appropriated to the furtherance of the blessed work he loved and to which he devoted so much of his valuable life here in Northwestern Oklahoma.

To his beloved companion who shared his sacrificial labors, and to whom is due an equal share in the glorious rewards of service, and to his old-time associates and fellow-laborers in the Gospel everywhere, this volume is affectionately dedicated.

B. A. LOVING.

Woodward, Oklahoma.

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| A Foreword..... | 9 |
| CHAPTER I. | |
| Early Environment..... | 13 |
| CHAPTER II. | |
| The Thrilling Adventures of Youth..... | 21 |
| CHAPTER III. | |
| From Cow Puncher to City Pulpit..... | 34 |
| CHAPTER IV. | |
| A Sky Pilot on the Nebraska Frontier..... | 43 |
| CHAPTER V. | |
| Pioneering in Oklahoma..... | 53 |
| CHAPTER VI. | |
| Through No Man's Land..... | 67 |
| CHAPTER VII. | |
| Fireside Evangelism..... | 79 |
| CHAPTER VIII. | |
| Wayside Evangelism..... | 93 |
| CHAPTER IX. | |
| A Wandering Missionary..... | 99 |
| CHAPTER X. | |
| A Missionary in Exile..... | 116 |
| CHAPTER XI. | |
| At Rest..... | 141 |

A FOREWORD

Some one has said that the Book of Acts is a continuous unrolling scroll. That portion of it recorded in the New Testament has no proper ending in that volume, because the Book will not be finished "until He come." Viewed from this standpoint, the finished Book of Acts will be the complete history of the Church.

It was Thomas Carlyle that said that history was condensed biography—in its last analysis being only men and women disclosing their inner selves through outward actions.

In that chapter of the Acts that includes the history of the last fifty years; there are no names that shine brighter than those who have wrought in the evangelization of the Mighty West of the Mighty America. In that great work of evangelism the Baptist denomination will be entitled to no little credit, for there will stream athwart the sky of that chapter a Milky Way of light, so to speak, of the blended lives of a great host of those who have planted and those who have watered the Baptist churches that fleck the mountains, the meadows,

the canyons, the country places, the hamlets, the villages, the towns and the cities of that great domain. The writer of this volume does well to gather up and preserve the biography of a man like Rev. T. K. Tyson who has contributed such a large share towards making and keeping the Far West Christian. Like Abraham Lincoln he was called from the common walks of life and was a self-made man. To use his own oft-repeated declaration, his Alma Mater was the University of Hard Knocks. It is but the simple truth to say that he was a most remarkable man; and there could be no exaggeration of the efficiency, cheerfulness and self-denial with which he served the Master.

I have doubtless been asked to write this foreword because of my association with Mr. Tyson in the Home Mission work on the Pacific Coast. And yet he had almost run his course when he joined me in the West. In the few years it was my privilege to know him personally, and to study his work at first hand, he impressed me as living upon the delectable mountains and in the sweet glory-zone that lies yet in this life but stretches away into that which is to come. His mantle fell back upon us, here on the Coast, like the mantle of the ascending Elijah on Elisha, and we have all felt stronger and better and more unselfish for having known him. As every piece of Mary's broken alabaster box must have been fragrant with the spikenard that was

released by its breaking, so it seems to me that all of his deeds and words among us were fragrant with the spirit of Christ that impulsed his life. He was a genuine Christian man. His home was an ideal Christian home. His children made up a noble family of Christian men and women and his life was one ever attested message to the Church of God and the Baptist denomination for the onward march of the Kingdom. The Baptists of this country will not see his like soon again; and they will be all the poorer for the lack of the vision.

It was fitting that he should go to his reward from the sunny slopes of Southern California. In the young city of Whittier where he had located his home, out among the cypresses and the roses and the many colored flowers of the flower land, his body rests with roses blooming around and birds nesting above in a most beautiful spot of "the quiet city." It is well that he should have such a farewell.

ALONZO M. PETTY.

Los Angeles, California, March 5, 1915.

THORNTON KELLY TYSON

PIONEER HOME MISSIONARY

CHAPTER I.

EARLY ENVIRONMENT.

OLIVER NORRIS TYSON, father of the subject of this biographical sketch, was born in Harrison County, Virginia (now West Virginia), March 25, 1799. His parents were poor but people of sterling qualities—a rugged, vigorous pioneer folk, accustomed from childhood to hardships and privations like most of the people of their day. When Oliver was about twenty-one years of age he married Miss Catherine Radcliffe, also a native of Harrison County. Being reared by wealthy parents Miss Radcliffe had enjoyed unusually good educational advantages for those times, a fact which later contributed very materially to the intellectual improvement and advancement of her husband.

Immediately following the union of these young lives, they formed that most sacred of earthly institutions—a Christian home. In this new home began the weaving of one of those sweet human

stories of which we never weary, a story of simple living and high thinking, of loving devotion, of heroic struggle and splendid achievement. The young husband was ambitious and persevering, a man of exalted purpose and invincible determination. During his boyhood his opportunities for an education had been very limited, and now that he had a family and home of his own and had assumed life's grave responsibilities, he felt more keenly than ever his lack of training; but with characteristic determination he entered upon a course of self-culture and improvement which was ultimately rewarded with splendid results. While toiling early and late at his trade, which was that of a blacksmith, he began a heroic struggle for an education, with his young wife as his first teacher. In spite of the many difficulties under which he labored he made considerable progress in his studies.

At this juncture there came to the humble Tyson home wonderful stories of frontier life in Indiana and Ohio which stirred the blood and fired the imagination of this virile, stalwart young Virginian. Born with the soul of a true pioneer his heart responded to the call of the new country for brave and strong men as settlers, and presently he found himself and wife at Jackson, Ohio. Here he pursued his cherished purpose of securing an education, studying at his forge by day, and at night re-

citing to the principal of the village school his lessons in geometry, trigonometry and surveying. He was now so far advanced that he felt equal to the task of putting his knowledge to practical use, so he entered the contest for the office of county surveyor of Jackson County and was elected, a position which he filled with much credit.

During these days of toil and struggle and achievement the little family circle was growing. First came Jonathan and Isaac to gladden the hearts of the young father and mother; and then dear little Mary and Ruth came to brighten the home with their childish prattle; and then in chronological order came Tacy and Thornton Kelly and Oliver Norris Junior—a family of seven bright, happy boys and girls. What glorious times they had playing together; and then, most splendid thing of all, some of the older boys were at times permitted to accompany their father on his surveying trips where they had many adventures they delighted to tell upon their return home.

It was in this environment that Thornton Kelly Tyson made his advent in the village of Jackson, Ohio, June 13, 1845. If it be true that destiny is shaped by the inexorable law of association with one's early surroundings, so that we may calculate with scientific accuracy the course a life will take, we might naturally conclude what manner of man

this child will be. However, if we do that we eliminate from our reckoning a factor more potential than natural laws, more powerful than the alchemy of human influences, and more stubborn than heredity. Therefore, we are not going to anticipate too much, because the future of this little life is to be directed by the hand of an overruling Providence, and though he may be a born frontiersman with a decided tendency toward Indian fighting and a wild cowboy existence, yet we shall find that, in the working out of details, his natural environment formed only a charming background and gave color to a career that was decidedly religious. As we follow this simple narrative we shall meet many delightful surprises.

Already we have taken a peep into the early home of him whose memory we delight to honor. We see him as a tiny infant in his mother's arms, surrounded by his wondering brothers and sisters, with the rugged surveyor-father looking proudly on. It is the unanimous opinion that this wonderful babe must have a name—a name worthy of the occasion and a credit to the child. Now naming the baby is always quite an event in any well regulated home, and the Tyson home was no exception to the rule. Indeed the occasion was attended with unusual interest when the little one, whose life was destined to bless the world, received his cognomen.

Whatever may be the opinion of the cynically inclined, the mooted question, "What's in a name?" was entitled to no serious consideration at their hands. It goes without question that there must be vast importance attached to the name their darling is to bear all through life. Several names were brought forward by well meaning friends and relatives, but none seemed quite good enough. After much discussion and animated "trying on" of names "Thornton" was at last decided upon and unanimously adopted by the family. However, the work was not wholly satisfactory to all parties concerned, for surely such a wonderful baby must not be permitted to enter upon the stage of human action without a middle name. To do full justice to the momentous occasion the name of "Kelly" was adopted from dear old Brother James Kelly, a remarkable Baptist preacher of Southern Ohio, and a close personal friend of the Tysons.

Our story would not be complete if we did not pause here long enough to give a brief sketch of this babe's picturesque namesake. Jim Kelly, a notoriously "wild" young man, was brought under the influence of the Gospel at a revival meeting and was finally induced to accept Christ as Savior and make a public profession of religion. The people were greatly amazed at this, and those who knew him best doubted the genuineness of his conversion.

His old "cronies" subjected him to many severe tests. As he had been used to dancing and other forms of worldliness that had a tremendous fascination for him, his old associates sought repeatedly by these means to entice him back to his old life of sin. One evening while on his way to prayer meeting he passed a place where the young people were assembling for a dance. These devotees of the ball room saw and recognized their old companion in sin and tried every possible means to persuade him to come in and have a "good time." Finally his "best girl" came to him and with her charms attempted to coax him to go in and dance with her. He finally consented to do so on condition that he be allowed to open the dance with prayer. His request being granted he entered the house and in the presence of the gay company announced his purpose. Taking his blushing sweetheart by the hand he knelt to pray. Nothing daunted by the laughter and giggles that greeted his ears, he prayed earnestly and long. A great solemnity at last came over the giddy young dancers. The matter did not prove to be so amusing as they had anticipated. They began quietly to leave the room one by one, until finally all were gone but the young lady kneeling by his side and the family residing in the house. The happy sequel of this story is that the young woman was converted and the neighborhood dances discontinued.

There is another incident in the life of this

young convert that is worthy of mention in this connection. Previous to his conversion he was distinguished for his profane swearing and rowdyism. His daily occupation was hauling heavy loads of charcoal with oxen over rough hilly roads. At the foot of an exceptionally large hill, it was his custom to begin swearing vociferously and thus to continue until the top of the hill was reached. It was his belief, as well as that of many others, that the oxen could not pull the hill unless he did some vigorous swearing and yelling. After he "got religion" his unbelieving neighbors decided to watch him, that they might ascertain whether his conversion was genuine. They hid themselves among the bushes and waited for the young man to pass with his oxen, expecting to hear him swear at them as they drew the heavy load of charcoal. Imagine their astonishment and disappointment when, at the bottom of the hill, instead of his accustomed profanity he began to sing with religious fervor,

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.

This was a different sound that greeted the oxen's ears from the one they had heard so often, and it is likely no lashes were laid on their backs, but they succeeded in pulling their load to the top of the hill,

and no doubt the poor brutes felt better than at previous times.

Of course, a life that exhibited such marvelous evidences of the regenerating power of God wielded a vast influence for good in that frontier country. Young Kelly later became a Baptist preacher, and at the time of which we write had distinguished himself as one of the most useful pioneer preachers of Southern Ohio. Even his blessed Christian influence had entered the Tyson home, for, as already intimated, he was a personal friend of the family and was held in such high esteem by them that they conferred his name upon their baby. It is quite possible that this child owed more to Rev. James Kelly than merely the name he bore through life. At the beginning of the establishment of their home in Virginia, we find that Mr. and Mrs. Tyson were Quakers, but at this period we find that they had "learned the way of the Lord more perfectly" and identified themselves with the Baptists. This may give us a hint as to the early home influence of little Thornton Kelly Tyson, which, at a later date, shaped itself into definite Baptist conviction and made him one of the great, useful men of the denomination.

CHAPTER II.

THE THRILLING ADVENTURES OF YOUTH.

AS ALREADY indicated, Oliver N. Tyson was a true pioneersman. As civilization advanced westward the newer country a little beyond was ever beckoning him onward. To such characters the virgin soil and breezy life and abundant opportunities of the "borderland" are peculiarly inviting. So, in 1847, when Thornton Kelly was two and a half years old, we find the father and mother with their growing family moving from the older settlement in Ohio to the new and undeveloped State of Iowa. From an old newspaper we quote the following interesting account:

"They traveled by water to Dubuque, Iowa. After spending three years in Dubuque and Jackson Counties in Eastern Iowa, these courageous pioneers, whose family now numbered ten children, crossed the State of Iowa and settled at old 'Council Bluffs,' later called Traders Point. That village washing into the Missouri River, Mr. Tyson went to 'Coonville,' where, in company with J. L. Sharp, J. W. Coolidge and Joseph Ranols, he, as their surveyor, laid out a town and changed the name to Glenwood.

Colonel Sharp had the government contract for surveying Northwestern Iowa and he employed Mr. Tyson to do that work. Competent surveyors being very scarce, Mr. Tyson was extensively employed in Pottawattomie, Mills and Fremont Counties in Iowa, and was one of the first to be called upon to lay out claims over the river in Nebraska. In his work on the Iowa side he was frequently assisted by Mr. Charles W. Pierce, then a young man. When a company was formed at Glenwood to establish the town of Plattsmouth, N. T., Mr. Tyson was employed as surveyor and laid out that town in its original form, not, however, as it is today. He also surveyed the sites of Rock Bluffs, Kanosha and other towns in Cass County. He was more or less intimately acquainted with almost every man who was prominent in the first and second territorial legislatures, indeed, not a few of them were his townspeople in Glenwood. Mr. Tyson was very popular in Mills County, his home. He was elected its first County Surveyor and later elevated to the office of County Judge, his second son, Isaac, succeeding him as surveyor. Judge Tyson was a public spirited man. In those days a county judge in Iowa exercised much the same powers and prerogatives as the county commissioners now. In his official capacity Mr. Tyson did perhaps as much as any other man in Western Iowa to secure the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad along its present route. In 1857 he borrowed

money for the county from the 'swamp land fund' and contracted for the erection of the present court house at Glenwood. This raised the ire of Pacific City, Loudon and other rival towns, and provoked one of the bitterest county seat wars in the history of the West. Brickbats, clubs and even pistols played a lively part. In order to defend himself against the fierce attacks of the *Pacific City Enterprise*, Mr. Tyson purchased *The Glenwood Opinion*, and two of his sons, Isaac and Jonathan R. Tyson, manned that battery. As the walls of the court house went up at Glenwood, Pacific City and Loudon began to move out on wheels, and the war was over. In 1860 the firm of Tyson, Street and Armstrong took two of the first combined quartz mills and saw mills that went to the Pike's Peak country. Oliver N. Tyson died of apoplexy at his home in Glenwood, December 6, 1863, his wife having preceded him to the land of rest by five years."

From this brief record we get a tolerably clear and comprehensive view of the scenes, circumstances and influences amidst which Thornton Tyson was developing character and growing into young manhood. He was literally in the "wild and woolly" West. Speaking of this period in his later years, he laughingly declared: "I followed the advice of Horace Greeley before it was uttered and took my family west to grow up with the country, my father

settling in Western Iowa in 1847. Civilization practically ended here at that time, and, aside from a few hardy pioneers who pressed on across the prairies, the plains were occupied chiefly by roaming bands of Indians who watched with open distrust the advance of the whites and overlooked no opportunity to revenge the wrongs to which they were subjected. Unfortunately, they were not always guided by an absolute sense of justice in retaliating, and innocents were often made to suffer."

It was amid such surroundings, within plain view of what is now Nebraska, but which at that time bore no name, that young Tyson was reared. Of course, he partook, to a considerable extent, of the nature of his wild surroundings, and the thrilling and romantic experiences of those days abided with him to the end of his remarkable career, making him a magnetic personality, a charming conversationalist and speaker, furnishing him with many fine illustrations which he used with splendid effect during his public ministry of more than thirty years.

Comparatively little is known of Thornton's boyhood. Judging from the numerous "traditions" floating down to us from the distant past, and from the anecdotes current among us, he must have been a remarkably active, mischievous, fun-loving little fellow. His schooling was rather of a primitive type and frequently interrupted, it seems. As there

were no public schools he attended a subscription school taught by a neighbor woman in her own home. One day Thornton discovered a setting hen in a store room adjoining the house, and in close proximity to the school room. As the days advanced his interest in biddy and her nest of eggs grew upon him to a wonderful extent; indeed, the matter occupied his mind to the exclusion of all other thoughts. His curiosity and interest finally reached a climax. One afternoon he was suddenly missed from the class room. His disappearance was quite mysterious. Nobody seemed to know where Master Thornton had gone. But suddenly an excited boyish yell, "She's hatched! She's hatched," greeted the ears of the anxious school-ma'am and her pupils. This noise, followed by the loud squawk and cackle and flutter of an indignant mother hen, the clatter-debang of falling stove pipe and other household furnishings, set the school into an uproar of excitement and delight surpassing even the famous occasion when "Mary brought her little lamb to school one day." Thornt, as everybody called him, was found kneeling by the nest counting a fine brood of young chickens and trying to protect himself from the vicious attacks of the enraged hen. When he became a Baptist preacher he related this and many other incidents of his school days to the great enjoyment of all who heard him.

We are told that he was the "champion rat

killer" of the family, and his efforts to exterminate those rodents created no end of excitement among his boy friends. Trapping and hunting were his chief sports. Nothing gave him greater satisfaction than to traverse the woods in quest of game or wander about over the Western plains herding cattle. He met with many wild adventures in those days and had many narrow escapes and thrilling experiences. In later life he told these stories with great emotion and appreciation, using them as illustrations of God's wonderful grace and keeping power. In connection with his comments on Psalm 34:7—"The angel of the Lord encampeth round them that fear Him"—he used the following incident from his youthful experiences, with thrilling effect, invariably moving his auditors to tears:

One day, the story goes, he went out on the great desolate plains in search of his father's cattle which had strayed away. While returning he started toward an empty house in the edge of some timber. When within about a hundred yards of the building he suddenly turned around and rapidly walked in an opposite direction. Why he did this he did not know at the time, only he knew he had an irresistible impression to turn back. A few days afterward a murderer was captured in that vicinity and hanged. Before springing the trap he was asked to speak if he had anything to say. He did so, and in his public

confession of crime related how he had his gun leveled at the heart of Thornton Tyson as he walked toward him; but when he was just about to pull the trigger the young man suddenly turned and mysteriously walked away, and before he could again get a bead on him he was too far off. The criminal knew it was young Tyson and said he had deliberately intended to kill him. Mr. Tyson never forgot how God had so wonderfully saved him from an untimely death.

At the tender age of twelve years Thornton was bereaved of that dearest and truest of all earthly friends—his mother. A great loneliness took possession of his childish heart, for not only his good mother, but a married sister and an elder brother, had but recently passed away. A sister five years his senior kept the family together until the death of his noble father some six or seven years later. It was during these sad days that the lonely motherless boy set out to learn the printer's trade in the newspaper office of his father and brother in Glenwood; but a few years at this prosaic occupation sufficed. From this time on we are presented with a veritable moving picture exhibiting an ever-changing panorama, an infinitely variegated scene and occupation, a career exceedingly checkered.

Passing from the hum-drum life of the printshop, we next see him engaged in the capacity of

freighter and "mule skinner," making frequent journeys across the wild, savage-infested plains from Missouri River points to Denver, then a hustling town and trading post of several thousand inhabitants. In referring to these days Mr. Tyson related the following to a reporter of *The Detroit Free Press*, on April 19, 1908:

"Railroads were unknown in that part of the country, and the only way of getting supplies through was in the old style prairie schooners, drawn by mule or ox teams. Drivers were termed 'mule skimmers' or 'bull whackers,' as the case might be, and we had a pretty lively existence. Progress was slow. Forty-five days was the schedule time from Atchison to Denver with horses, and the same length of time was required from Plattsmouth, Nebraska, with ox teams. The plains fairly teemed with hostile Indians, who made life miserable for those seeking to reach Denver.

"To insure delivery of the mails, the Government maintained military stations every fifty miles along the trail, which stretched away in an almost straight line, and was nearly as hard as a paved street and wide enough for two big wagons to travel side by side. In addition to guarding the mails, the Government imposed certain well defined restrictions on freighters. We were organized into companies, consisting of sixty wagons and one hun-

dred men, and no outfit was permitted to start out or continue its journey unless measuring up to the requirements.

"The rigid manner in which this rule was enforced is exemplified by an experience in which I participated. We started out on a trip once with a mixed party, consisting of mule and ox teams. The second day out the boss of the mule teams quietly passed the word around among his drivers that we should no longer linger with the slow-going oxen, but push on alone, leaving them to shift for themselves. This was hailed as a brilliant idea until the following morning, when a detachment of cavalry rode up and informed us that we would not be permitted to proceed without the rest of the party. There was nothing to do but to wait for the boss of the ox teams, who, seeing that he was deserted, had gone back to the starting point and informed the commanding officer of what had happened.

"At night a camp would be selected with a view to shutting off all possibility of an attack, the wagons would be placed in a circle, log chains run from one wagon to another, and the corral thus formed would be occupied by the horses and men. In the years I was freighting I never ran foul of the Indians, although one day we came upon eleven newly-made graves and the burning ruins of a half dozen wagons. The entire party had been wiped

out by the redskins, their horses driven off and their wagons destroyed. Another party, reaching the spot shortly before us, gave the whites a decent burial and then pressed on, not knowing how soon they might be called upon to fight for their own lives."

The next glimpse we get of this daring young plainsman he is a polite clerk in a grocery store in Denver, Colorado, weighing out sugar and coffee, catering to the trade and meeting the competition of a thriving young city. But such a civilized life was entirely too tame for our young hero; so in a few months we find him enlisted in the State militia and going out with his soldier's uniform on and gun in hand to fight savages. He tells of this experience in the following language:

"In 1864 the Indians became so daring in their operations that it was decided to put an end to the trouble. Accordingly, Colonel Shivington, commanding the First Colorado Volunteers, planned a campaign that proved effective. I was a member of the Third Colorado Volunteers, and, together with portions of the Second New Mexico and First Colorado regiments, under Colonel Shivington, we set out in search of the Indians. After a forced march of forty miles from Fort Lyon, we came upon a camp of Cheyennes and Arapahoes at daylight one November morning. What followed is one of the things

I would willingly forget if I could. We numbered only 600, but the Indians, 900 strong, were at our mercy, and, in spite of the gallant fight they made, were overpowered. Great numbers were killed, including many of their women and children, and now as I look back on it I know the slaughter was clearly unwarranted.

“That put an end to the trouble, so far as those tribes were concerned, but it also led to a Congressional investigation, resulting in severe condemnation of the men responsible for the expedition. The Cheyennes were led by Chief White Antelope, who was killed in battle, and the Arapahoes by Chief Left Hand, who it was supposed also lost his life. He managed to escape, however, and later, together with his tribesmen, settled on the reservations in what is now Oklahoma. Left Hand became converted to Christianity, and is now an active worker in a Baptist church.”

Mr. Tyson always regretted the part he played in the role of Indian fighter, and so far as he was concerned, this was a closed incident. It is truthfully said of him that “he never referred to it of his own accord, and when the subject was broached, he always spoke regretfully of what he regarded as the one blot on his record.” In explanation of this unfortunate event he said of himself: “I used to hold to the mistaken idea, in common with others, that

the only good Indian was a dead one. Now I know better, and if I could wipe out those scenes in which I participated I would be happy." There is no doubting the sincerity of this statement, for, as we advance in our narrative, we find it clearly demonstrated by the fact that many of the best years of his life were spent in spreading the Gospel in those very same regions where he had previously fought the Indians, ministering not only to the white settlers but to the material and spiritual wants of the red men, offering encouragement and striving in every possible way to make amends for his youthful imprudence. To those of us who have resided in and traversed those prairies and seen the bleaching bones of Indians killed by young Tyson and his soldier companions, and who have been honored by being his associates in the gospel ministry in his later life, and for many years witnessed his holy zeal and missionary fervor as he traversed those plains under the appointment of the Home Mission Society, laying the foundations of Christianity, it is almost impossible to conceive of him once chasing savages and forcing them into submission to the white man's rule. As some one has said of him, "There was nothing in the soft, musical voice to strike terror to the heart of the most timid; the smile that continually played across those placid features, beaming a welcome, was anything but repellent." Thus was the regenerating power of God's

Spirit manifested in this life, in that where sin did once abound now grace did much more abound.

May the reader pardon this digression in which we have anticipated things that lay far into the future. We will now return to our narrative and follow events in their natural order.

CHAPTER III

FROM COW PUNCHER TO CITY PULPIT.

IN THE preceding chapter we see young Tyson acting in the role of soldier. By a reference to the records we find that he held this position for only a short time, for within a little over three months from the time of his enlistment his regiment was discharged and he once more became a civilian, but not wholly "civilized," for the very next act shows him performing as a cowboy. And he made a good one too; but for some reason he soon went back to his old occupation of freighting. With the advent of railroads old methods of transportation were speedily put out of commission. This circumstance necessitated another change of occupation for Mr. Tyson. He now returned to his old home at Glenwood and went to work in the print shop where he had learned the trade when a mere child, before the death of his father. He was now a mature man, strong, healthy and vigorous.

It was about this time that an experience came into his life that was destined to change his whole future course. It seems that while residing at Glenwood at an earlier period he attended a great revival

meeting at the Baptist church, in which he saw scores of persons gloriously saved and baptized. He was brought under deep conviction of sin but was not converted until some years later. Indeed, it was not until now, while again employed in the newspaper office of his father and brother, that he made a definite surrender of his heart to Christ. In after years he related, on many occasions, his experience of conversion in the following impressive language:

“The training of my godly parents gave me a deep reverence for the Bible as the Word of God. At the age of fourteen I attended a very sweeping revival in Glenwood, Iowa, where I was brought up. More than one hundred professed conversion, seventy-five of whom I saw added to the church by baptism. During all this meeting I was most pungently convicted of sin, but no one gave me a word of encouragement or seemed to entertain the thought that a boy could be saved. At least, that is the way the conduct of the workers impressed me. I could not understand why the minister, Rev. J. W. Daniels, should preach so pointedly about my sins, when I was too young to be a Christian! After the meeting closed I felt a great bitterness toward the pastor and church, arguing to myself that they did not want me to be saved. This continued for about four years, until the death of my father in December, 1863, when all my former convictions came back

upon me, intensified by these four years of my wayward life. Just then a revival meeting would have been a most welcome thing; but none was in progress and I had to deal with God alone. The Holy Spirit was doing His office work with me (John 3:5). After several weeks of groping in blindness—trying in some way to merit the Lord's pardoning mercy, being overwhelmed with the sense of the justness of my condemnation (John 3:18), I was glad to surrender all and to plead with the Lord to have His own way in the matter and take me as I was (Acts 9:6). This definite surrender caused me to rejoice first of all in the realization of the blessed truth that Jesus had purchased my pardon long ago on the Cross, then in the knowledge of victory over my own stubborn heart."

After his conversion he was received, upon the profession of his faith and baptism, into the fellowship of the Glenwood Baptist Church. It was a genuine regeneration. He now became deeply interested in the King's business and was as active in church work as he was previously in worldly affairs.

A little later he showed up in a newspaper office at Sidney, Iowa. While working at his trade there he was elected superintendent of the Baptist Sunday School, a position he filled with characteristic vigor and earnestness.

An interesting bit of romance now came into

view. In April of 1869, while canvassing for *The Sidney Union*, the newspaper he was assisting in publishing, he met Miss Lucy A. Depuy, a talented school teacher of Hamburg, Iowa, and a member of the Baptist Church. The acquaintance ripened into friendship, the attraction was mutual, and a pleasant correspondence was begun. The young lady taught school that summer just over the State line in Missouri, about five miles south of Hamburg. About every alternate Sunday afternoon found the young man over at Hamburg, a distance of ten miles from Sidney, his home town. He usually came on horse back. A certain noble woman in Whittier, California, writing, forty-five years later of this particular affair, beautifully says: "There was nothing striking or startling about the courtship, only a steady deepening conviction of their need of each other. Many of his people were dead and the others were scattered, and he wanted a home of his own. She felt she was willing to work and help make that home. They were married September 22, 1869, at her parents' home in Hamburg."

Mr. and Mrs. Tyson lived in Sidney that fall and winter. The following spring they moved to Glenwood. When they had been married a little over four years, Mr. Tyson bought a newspaper and moved to Riverton, Iowa, nine miles east of Hamburg. The paper was called *The Riverton Advocate*,

and the enterprise proved to be quite a successful venture.

For several years, indeed, ever since he had become a Christian, Mr. Tyson had a conviction that God had called him to preach. In his declining days he frequently spoke regretfully, in the following words, of his postponement of ministerial work:

“While from the first I had a strong conviction that I ought in some way to devote my life to the service of God, it is with the greatest regret that I confess that it was thirteen years later that I finally yielded to His call to the Gospel ministry. How shall I praise Him as I ought for the privilege of spending nearly a third of a century in such a blessed service?”

The feeling of unrest and growing desire for the ministry became so strong that he sold his newspaper in the spring of 1877 and made his first attempt at preaching. His brethren shared with him the conviction that God had a special work for him, and so the following license to preach was granted:

RIVERTON BAPTIST CHURCH.

Riverton, Iowa, June 28, 1877.

To Brother T. K. Tyson,

Dear Brother: In compliance with the duty imposed on me by the church of which you are a member, I communicate to you a copy of a resolution of the church, by

which, it was unanimously approved of your preaching the Gospel, namely:

Resolved, that Brother T. K. Tyson be granted a license to preach the Gospel.

By these presents you are therefore authorized to conduct the public worship of God; to expound His Word, and to do whatever is assigned to the Christian ministry, excepting rule and government, and the administration of the ordinances; for these you must receive ordination by the "laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." The work to which the Lord has called you to consecrate your life is great and honorable, but of fearful responsibility.

May the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls give you grace to make full proof of your ministry, "in all things, showing yourself a pattern of good works; in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity and sound speech that cannot be condemned."

And when your work is done, may He crown you with the glory reserved for those who have turned many to righteousness.

THOMAS THOMSON,
Church Secretary.

We wish to state here that, so far as human standards are concerned, Mr. Tyson did not measure up to the stature of an educated man. His schooling was unavoidably limited as already indicated. It was no fault of his that he never received a collegiate or theological training. But he was by no means an illiterate man. He had made the best possible use of his limited school advantages, had read extensively, thought profoundly, had a keen intellect, knew men, knew God, and knew the spiritual teach-

ing of the Bible. He had received splendid training in the "School of Christ" and in the "College of Hard Knocks." His twenty-five years of rough-and-tumble life and his experience as a newspaper man fitted him admirably for his peculiar course of service in the ministry. He sometimes deplored his lack of theological training, but, to many of us younger preachers who grew up under him, he was a veritable theological seminary in himself. Be it said to his credit that it is doubtful if any man ever made better use of his natural and acquired gifts and powers than did Mr. Tyson. He proved himself equal to every task assigned him, for God was with him "in power and demonstration of the Spirit."

After receiving his license to preach he lost no time but at once set about to find a place where God could use him. He felt led of the Spirit to locate at Wahoo, Nebraska, where he assumed pastoral care of two country churches, devoting one-half time to each place. One was known as the Marietta Church, nine miles north of Wahoo; the other was the Rock Creek Church, about the same distance south of town. While pastor of these churches a council was called and he was formally ordained. His credentials read as follows:

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that on November 23, 1877, T. K. Tyson was ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry, by a

council convened with, and by official invitation of, the Marietta Baptist Church, State of Nebraska. The council was composed of ministers and delegates from the following Baptist churches: Fremont, Ashland, Wahoo, Willow Creek, Weeping Water, and Marietta. The examination was *highly* satisfactory.

Rev. J. W. Osborne of Fremont preached the ordaining sermon; J. N. Webb, D.D., District Secretary of the A. B. H. M. Society, offered the ordaining prayer; charge to candidate by Rev. W. I. Price; charge to church and hand of fellowship to candidate by J. N. Webb. Laying on of hands by ministers present.

J. N. WEBB, Moderator.

W. I. PRICE, Clerk.

After closing a successful pastorate with the two country churches above mentioned, he accepted a call of the Wahoo Church, with which he did a splendid work. From there he went to Conway, Iowa, then to Russell, same State; and from there back to Nebraska to become pastor successively at Valparazo, Palmyra, Western and Tobias. Some of these were promising little cities and all were good towns and strategic points religiously, and the churches, some of them, required the services of a strong and capable man. The record shows that Pastor T. K. Tyson was equal to the task. Verily, the distance from "cow puncher to pulpit" seems far-stretched and attended with apparently insurmountable difficulties, yet, by the grace of God, he successfully attained it in an astonishingly short time. That he "made good" at every point in his

religious work, as he had done previously in his secular occupations, is substantiated by the records and by the unanimous testimony of hundreds of men and women now living who were eye-witnesses of his efforts.

Many beautiful tributes to his devotion, faithfulness and efficiency have come to us from members of those churches that once enjoyed the benediction of his pastoral care and pulpit ministrations. Our limited space forbids the publication of these tender expressions of love and reverence for this faithful Iowa and Nebraska pastor. Many bear testimony to the fact that he was a minister of consolation to them in dark hours of grief; others tell of how his sweet gospel preaching turned their feet from the ways of sin to the path of righteousness; and still others speak of the cheer and sunshine which his pastoral visits brought to their home. We shall never be able to estimate the value of such a life. How it ought to inspire us to consecrate our talents, be they great or small, to the service of the Master and to devote ourselves unreservedly to the uplift of humanity, inasmuch as we see that our labor will not be in vain in the Lord!

CHAPTER IV.

A SKY PILOT ON THE NEBRASKA FRONTIER.

THE curtain is just now lifting upon the real life work of this mighty man of God. All that has gone before was incidental and preliminary. His labors in the various pastorates he has held were but preparatory for what was to follow. He had been cultivating his intellectual gifts, his soul-winning powers and his social qualities with which God had so marvelously endowed him. By this time he had developed into a charming personality and a winsome, magnetic speaker. Mr. Tyson was never a silver-tongued orator, but his heart-eloquence, his discriptive powers and his unique and inimitable style of public address were simply irresistible, as all will testify who have been under the spell of his soft, musical voice.

Because of his child-like simplicity people did not realize that there was a really great man among them. In that very simplicity, genuineness, transparency of character and unassuming manner lay his true greatness. The most timid child did not feel awed in his presence. The little ones, as well as the older people, were drawn to him as instinc-

tively as a bee to a honey-laden flower or a babe to its mother's bosom. Those of us who knew him best did not try to *analyze* him, we just *appropriated* him. As we think of him now it dawns upon us that he was a strong, forceful character who made his impress upon all who met him. Somehow we cannot forget that kindly face that invariably smiled upon us, or those clear eyes that looked straight into ours, or the wholesome sunshine that seemed to radiate from him, and the square cut jaws that sometimes closed with a snap, denoting his absolute fearlessness, unlimited reserve power and determination that would overcome all obstacles once he became convinced he was in the right.

At the time of which we now write (January, 1894), we find him assuming the duties of state evangelist and missionary for all of Western Nebraska, as an employee of the State Convention Board co-operating with the American Baptist Home Mission Society, a position he very acceptably filled for several years. His field is extensive, the needs many, and the responsibility great; but the work is just to his liking. For a long time his zeal for winning the unsaved keep him going away from his home and his pastorates to hold special meetings, so now that he is commissioned by his denomination to do that very thing he is in his natural element.

He made his home and headquarters at 3119 O

Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, or rather, to be more accurate, that was where his family lived while he traversed his great field in the interest of the Lord's work. His salary was usually about \$720 a year, and rarely exceeded \$800. It is plainly evident that mercenary considerations were not his incentive in entering a service so full of toil and self-denial.

The dear man loved his home and family as much as any preacher ever did. As he made those long missionary tours over the expansive frontier through summer heat and the blizzards of winter, being away sometimes for many months in succession, his great heart turned sadly and tenderly to his wife and little ones in their home in Lincoln. We find a beautiful tribute written by him to his wife, dated January 18, 1895, and sent to her from Farnam, while he was probably engaged in a meeting far away from home. He calls it

MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

(To my darling wife, on her 47th birthday, January 25, 1895.)

Though I am far away,
 My loved one,
 I'm thinking of the day,
 My lone one,
 That marks another year of life
 For you, my own beloved wife,
 My own one.

As years have passed away,
 My dear one,
Your hair has turned to gray,
 My fair one;
But this has truly added grace
And sweetness to your lovely face,
 My rare one.

As mother or as wife,
 My pure one,
You've freely spent your life,
 My true one;
In toil for me and those we love,
Your own unselfish love to prove,
 My brave one.

The worth of one so true,
 My tried one,
As time has proven you
 My proved one,
Exceeds in value rubies bright
As far as day exceeds the night,
 My fond one.

As years may come and go,
 My sweet one,
I'll try to make you know,
 My bright one,
What I have tried so oft to tell:
That, my darling wife, I love you well,
 My best one.

And when your face I see,
My missed one,
Time and again you'll be
My kissed one,
My kisses shall be set to rhymes
And given forty-seven times,
My blest one.

—*Thornton K. Tyson.*

No man capable of such sentiments can be a cold-hearted husband or indifferent father. Though consumed with his passion for souls and literally swallowed up by his great life-mission so that his visible presence was practically lost to his home, yet to his human heart it was a tremendous sacrifice, but a sacrifice which he conscientiously and cheerfully made—a supreme living sacrifice which his devotion to duty enabled him to lay on the altar of consecration—"a sacrifice holy and acceptable" to Him who has called to Christian discipleship, saying: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

We are not in possession of all his quarterly and annual reports to the State Board and to the Home Mission Society, covering this period, but the few we have at hand furnish us with limited data which are exceedingly interesting and illuminating. From these reports our imagination gets vivid impressions

of a life remarkably strenuous, as he endeavored to do a sound, constructive work and lay wisely the foundations of Christianity on a widely extended field. One quarter he traveled 4,225 miles, another it was 3,500 miles, still another he went 3,446 miles, etc., in the interest of his work. Taking these reports as samples we may say conservatively that he must have traveled at least 10,000 miles a year for a period of five or six years. When we remember that most of this distance was made over frontier roads by buggy, wagon, horse back, and sometimes on foot, the imagination is almost staggered by the magnitude of his labors. He made thousands of religious visits in the shacks, soddies and dugouts; each quarter he visited an average of twenty-five towns and communities in the interest of the work. The reports also show that many successful revival meetings were held by him during each year and scores of persons were converted and oaptized. He organized many new churches. It is amazing the number of sermons and addresses he delivered, prayer meetings conducted, Bible readings given, Sunday Schools visited, articles and letters written for publication, etc. In addition to all this he found time to attend State Board meetings, associations, Sunday School conventions and pastor's conferences at Lincoln, Omaha and elsewhere, giving inspirational and informing addresses and awakening a deeper interest in the great home mission enterprise.

One thing standing out so prominent in his reports that it cannot be overlooked was his distribution of good literature—tracts, religious and temperance papers, Bible and Testaments. He must have scattered millions of pages of wholesome reading broadcast over all that region. In speaking to the writer of this phase of his work, some years ago, he testified joyously of some of the visible results following this seed sowing. As we shall devote a chapter further on to this particular line of evangelism, we shall say no more of it in this connection.

We shall not attempt a detailed account of his labors as missionary and state evangelist but will produce in his own language an incident which is doubtless fairly illustrative of those days and characteristic of the work he was constantly doing. When acting as a special representative of the Home Mission Society in the East, in 1908, he recounted some of his early toils and struggles on the Nebraska frontier, as follows:

“Now that I look back on them, many of the incidents that seemed commonplace enough when they transpired are interesting. At one time I was booked to dedicate a Baptist meeting house at Burwell, Nebraska. I reached that place one evening and found that no one knew of any proposed dedication, or even the existence of the church. Later it developed that the meeting house was twenty-three

miles west of Burwell. I started to drive with a very slow team, at 9 in the morning, and at 2 o'clock the next morning arrived at my stopping place. My bedroom was in a corn crib, with one end made tight enough to hold small grain. It was furnished with a bed and lamp, and, after the ride I had undergone, seemed very comfortable. The colored man with whom I stopped called me shortly after daylight, for we had a hard day's work ahead. We started early and held a prayer meeting, a recognition council, a service of dedication and three preaching services, all conducted by myself.

"I shall never forget the appearance of that meeting house, which was hardly finished. It was constructed from the remnants of an old shop, and was fourteen feet wide and twenty-two feet long. The boards were liberally decorated with portions of circus posters, and great cracks showed in the sides. One row of rough boards around the walls furnished seats for the congregation, the church as recognized consisting of five members.

"It was 11 that night when I got to bed in the corn crib. At 4 the next morning I was up and started back to Burwell, riding the entire twenty-three miles on a wagon loaded with hogs. The round trip occupied forty-two hours, and furnished a unique but by no means unusual experience in those times when, what is now one of the most prosperous

sections of the country, was making a fight for existence."

That Elder T. K. Tyson was a true "sky pilot," successfully saving souls from shipwreck on the rocks of sin, by pointing them to the great Beacon Light of the world and leading them to direct their barque to the port of heaven, is further illustrated by the experience of Claud B. Miller, now a prominent Baptist preacher of Missouri, but at that time a farmer boy on the Nebraska frontier. Mr. Miller says:

"Brother Tyson came to Tobias, a small town in Saline County, to assist Elder Horney, the pastor, in a meeting. I had been reared a Methodist, but somehow when the news of this particular meeting reached me, while at work on the farm some five miles distant, I was impressed that I should attend. I did so, though for several years I had not attended a single church service. Brother Tyson preached, simply, lovingly, but what he said I have forgotten. One thing, however, I did not forget, and that was his singing, 'Jesus Is Tenderly Calling.' That message in song reached my heart. I was converted. Not long after I began preaching, and after some years of preparation, I entered the active ministry. After my conversion he said to me, 'Now Claud, you can be a useful man in the world if you are willing to be *chink and daubin*.' Many years later I met him

in Oklahoma City during the Northern Baptist Convention. He put his arms about me in a fatherly way and said, 'So this is my son Claud?—my son in the Gospel,' and tears of joy ran down our cheeks as we renewed our fellowship. The dear man is gone now while many whom he led into the Kingdom are still striving to do the Lord's will. Let us be faithful."

Many such sincere expressions of appreciation might be given from persons now active in the Lord's work, who can trace their conversion or their consecration to definite Christian service to Missionary Tyson in Western Nebraska. All this shows that he yet abides among us in the holy influences he has set in operation in the lives of others, influences that will go on with increasing momentum and ever widening circles to the end of time. Such are the possibilities of any life fully consecrated.

Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

CHAPTER V.

PIONEERING IN OKLAHOMA.

FROM 1894 to 1898 Brother Tyson served as missionary-evangelist in Western Nebraska, as seen in the preceding chapter. Some time in the early part of 1898 he resigned this work and went back into the pastorate, but, as usual, his work was with mission churches. We might fittingly say in this connection, in the language of one of his daughters, Mrs. W. W. Dennis: "Most of his life work was done in the employ of the Home Mission Society, or with some struggling church which the Society helped to support. The few occasions on which he was with self-supporting churches, his sympathies were so much more with the smaller struggling churches that he soon returned to the work he loved best and that he felt called to do."

In the early spring of 1901, while pastor of the Baptist Church in the town of Western, Nebraska, the old desire to get out on the "firing line" again predominated. Nebraska was now becoming an old settlement—entirely too staid and established for a true pioneer. That wonderful new Territory of Oklahoma, but recently opened to settlement, was

a frontier country full of the most wonderful possibilities. To a man actuated by the true missionary spirit, it was an exceptionally inviting field. Perhaps no new country ever offered grander opportunities to persons who desire to win souls, organize new churches and engage in the general work of foundation-laying along religious and educational lines; and, in addition to this, there were offered to these workers splendid inducements in the way of a homestead. Many a faithful preacher, whose years of sacrificial service left him on the eve of old age, with nothing saved up to sustain himself and family when his services were no longer in demand, found in this country of free homes 160 acres of land with a reasonable prospect of self-support during his declining years, while, at the same time, about him were unlimited opportunities to go out and preach the Gospel to the settlers and help in many ways in establishing the work of the Kingdom. It is not an unreasonable presumption to state that some such thought as this was in the mind of "Father" Tyson at this particular time.

We trust the author of this memoir may be pardoned for a bit of personal reference in this connection, inasmuch as a kindly Providence has given him a humble place among the "actors" in this story from this point on to its conclusion. We were at this time (January, 1900, to April, 1901) pastor of

the Baptist churches at Woodward and Moscow, Oklahoma; indeed, so far as we know, we were the only Baptist preacher in all that section of the new country. As has invariably been our custom, we occasionally had a write-up of our work, as well as the needs and possibilities of Northwestern Oklahoma, published in *The Word and Way* and other denominational papers. These news letters, "fresh from the front" caught the attention of Brother Tyson, confirmed him in his determination to go to Oklahoma, and perhaps aided him to some extent in deciding to locate in the Northwestern section of the Territory. He wrote us twice, expressing the interest he felt in our published accounts, requested more detailed information and indicated a wish to locate on such a field. We had never before heard of Mr. Tyson, but his letters impressed us most favorably, and as we had long been praying the "Lord of the harvest to send laborers" into this great field that was white unto harvest, we felt that our prayers were now about to be answered. None but those who have been isolated workers on a vast mission field can fully realize what joy we felt at such a prospect. In our replies to Mr. Tyson's inquiries we frankly stated the conditions as we understood them, suggested many places where work might be begun, mentioned the great need of true missionary laborers willing to make sacrifices, and concluded with the remark that we could hold out

no great encouragement in the way of financial support.

To our great delight, one evening about dusk, an elderly gentleman came to our little home in Woodward. As we met him at the door he greeted us with that charming cordiality that won the hearts of so many people, introduced himself as "Brother Tyson," and said: "I suppose this is Brother Loving, pastor of the Baptist Church at this place." The dear man sat and chatted with Mrs. Loving and myself for a long time. We told him of our work in particular and of Northwestern Oklahoma in general, all of which seemed to interest him very much. He related some of his experiences as a missionary in Nebraska and Iowa and concluded the conversation by telling us of his intention to locate with his family on a claim in this section of the Territory, and with his homestead as a base of operations to reach out and supply all the surrounding destitution with the Gospel. Of course, we were glad to welcome him among us and bid him god-speed in his undertaking.

The morning following this pleasant visit we saw him "lined-up" at the United States Land Office, awaiting his turn to file on a quarter section of government land which he purposed to make his future home. We shall never forget the admiration we felt for this grand old man as we thought of all

that was before him in the way of hardships and privations as he established a home on a piece of "raw" land in a thinly populated section of our new country, and at the same time carry the glad tidings of salvation to all the settlers within a radius of many miles. It fired our youthful enthusiasm to the boiling point and has ever been to us an incentive to greater endeavor.

In April, 1901, Mr. Tyson moved, with his family, from Nebraska to the government claim on which he had previously filed, at Belva, Woodward County, Oklahoma. In his own unconventional style he tells us of those times as follows:

"My first night in Oklahoma was spent with Mr. Orvin Wylie and family in their tent three miles north of Belva (then called Tucker). When I moved my family onto our claim we lived in two small tents for several months while gathering material for our gyp house. For a mate for our faithful mare, 'Beauty,' I had given ten dollars in cash, and three chairs and a plow for an old buckskin pony. While on my way to Quinlan for a load of lumber, I was singing cheerily the chorus:

*"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
I'll do what you want me to do,"* etc.

when the front wheel went into a chuck-hole so suddenly that the spring seat and driver went off to-

gether. In the fall my collar bone was broken and several ribs were dislocated. In God's good providence Dr. A. C. Hancock, a Baptist and a good friend of our family, was near at hand starting a shanty on his own claim. He took me in charge and sent me home in a sad plight physically, *where I had plenty of time to reflect on whether I meant what I was singing when I went down.* My son Jay then took charge of the building enterprise until he was laid aside for several weeks by typhoid fever, brought on no doubt by drinking the stale water which we had to haul from six to nine miles. The hardships which my wife and family endured those first few months are not pleasant to dwell upon; but God has turned them all to account for His glory. There has never been a day that we have not rejoiced in the good providence that brought us to Oklahoma."

Following his recovery from the accident above referred to he began a missionary campaign such as has seldom been witnessed. According to his reports to the mission boards, he traveled more than 20,000 miles in four years, three-fourths of that distance being by team, and he made over 4,000 visits. In prosecuting the work three horses were worn out and two buggies rendered practically worthless. "The settlers were for the most part poverty stricken," says Mr. Tyson, "in many instances the families

existing for a long time on bread and water." In spite of the destitution prevailing, and the many difficulties to be encountered, "pioneering in Oklahoma" was tremendously successful as the following narrative will show.

We are sure the reader will pardon the frequent and liberal quotations from Missionary Tyson's own writings covering this interesting period of his life. Some years ago, while we were editor of *The Northwestern Baptist*, he wrote, at our request, a series of splendid articles for publication, the general title of which was "Pioneering in Oklahoma." So we have from his own pen, while the events were yet fresh in his memory, an accurate and intensely interesting account of his experiences in laying the foundations of our work here in Northwestern Oklahoma. Quoting from these articles the story proceeds as follows:

"My first sermons in Oklahoma were preached in the school house at Belva. About June 23rd of that year I visited the church at Woodward, and found to my surprise that B. A. Loving had resigned. I had called on this noble servant of the Lord, and his wife, equally noble, at the time of filing on my claim. There I learned that I was the only Baptist preacher of which they had any account in Woodward, Day and Beaver Counties. I supplied the Woodward Church half-time for several months, in-

deed, until they called Rev. D. Noble Crane, God bless the man, the following February. In the meantime I had a precious meeting with the Moscow Church, resulting in a revival which continued, whether they had preaching or not, for several months. My first church was organized December 6, 1901, at the Dunston school house, near Dewey; for a time it was called Dewey Church, now South Persimmon. My second was at Clarion in Woods County. For the most part, the dates of other organizations are to be found in the minutes of the Northwestern and the Woodward County Associations. I also organized the Garret and Frisco Creek Churches in Beaver County; three churches down in the 'New Country,' also at Fritzland and Cherokee in Woods County, and made the beginning of an organization at Fairview, now in Major County.

"On my first visit to Moscow in September, 1901, just prior to the revival I have mentioned, I met Rev. Mr. Jordan, Methodist circuit rider for that region, who very complacently told me that the Baptists there had 'given up' and were all going into his class and would give him some \$125.00, which they had on hand, toward building a Methodist Episcopal parsonage. I said nothing, but winked with my other eye and thought I would see about that later. The splendid results now to be seen at Moscow show that he had counted his chickens too

soon. It is due to our Methodist brethren to say that this man Jordan was exceedingly unpopular among them; and the last I knew of him his own official board at Homestead locked him out of their meeting house several weeks before conference.

"I had been travelling over the regions of Northwestern Oklahoma for about six months and had not had the pleasure of looking into the face of a Baptist preacher during all that time. I learned that the Oklahoma Baptist Convention was to meet at Enid on the 10th of October. Just that I might refresh my memory as to how a company of Baptist ministers might look, I drove to Enid, a distance of 125 miles, to feast my eyes on the sight. I took a good supply of Baptist literature and was enabled in that way to sow good seed all along the way. I also found several Baptists and gained information as to the religious outlook in the various settlements through which I passed, which I was enabled to turn to good account afterwards.

"I can hardly tell with what emotion I went into the First Baptist Church of Enid, after having cared for my jaded team. There were gathered in that house perhaps a hundred Baptist preachers, besides many other delegates. But my spirit sank a little when I heard the pastor, Rev. M. M. Munger, announce that all their homes were filled to overflowing and no further accommodations could be fur-

nished. Every word of the proceedings was deeply interesting to me, but I must confess that I kept wondering occasionally what a poor fellow would do at that distance from home, and with a very light pocket book. But my fears were all ungrounded, for just before the close of the session Mrs. Dr. A. M. Kelso, an old friend from Lincoln, Nebraska, recognized me and informed me that there was room for me at their home. Thereafter 'not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast.'

"It was at this meeting that I met for the first time Rev. L. L. Smith, of blessed memory, Rev. F. C. McConnell, then secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention, and many other brethren whom I have since learned to dearly love in the Lord. At the close of the meeting I made a trip on the train to El Reno where other Nebraska friends had invited me to visit them.

"On my return trip from Enid I made the acquaintance of Dr. Woods and family at Orienta, now called Clarion, and on their urgent invitation I returned to that place the last days of December, and on the first day of January organized the Pleasant View Baptist Church at the home of Deacon J. M. Gard.

"While at the Baptist State Convention at Enid I made the acquaintance of Rev. R. H. Gore, pastor at Alva. From him I learned that the Alva and

Woodward Churches had not united with any Association. We there formed a plan for the organization of an association for the Northwest country. But alas! Brother Gore's health failed and he was obliged to resign and move to Roswell, New Mexico, before our plan could be carried out. By the following June the number of churches had increased so that we felt we could make a respectable start, and accordingly the 6th of June, 1902, was the time and place set for such an organization. Six churches were represented at that meeting and 'The Northwestern Baptist Association of Oklahoma' was organized. Rev. D. Noble Crane was then pastor at Woodward, and Rev. Z. J. Edge had succeeded Brother Gore at Alva. Rev. E. R. Williams, pastor at May, was unable to meet with us on account of high water, not being able to ford either the North Canadian or the Cimarron. Brother J. L. Rupard, representing the American Baptist Publication Society in Oklahoma, was with us and was made temporary clerk, until the election of Brother Edge to that office. Now Brother Edge was an entire stranger to all the brethren present, and somehow got the names and initials of pastors and delegates sadly mixed up, as the minutes of that meeting will fully attest.

"From this small beginning in the way of organizing our forces for the carrying out of the purposes

that were in all our hearts to take Northwestern Oklahoma for Christ and the Baptist cause, have grown the Woodward County Association as it is today, also the Harper County Association, Salt Fork Valley and the Beaver County Association, all of which were originally a part of the Northwestern. Never was a happier band of the Lord's servants brought together for a similar purpose; and how our most ardent hopes have been exceeded is a matter of common knowledge among us today.

"After the first regular meeting of our Northwestern Association, which was held at Woodward, I determined to comply with the request of our lamented brother L. L. Smith, then state superintendent of missions, to make my way toward the meeting of the Oklahoma Convention, which was held at Norman that year. Accordingly I started by team, visiting the Central District Association at Watonga on the way. This was the first Association I was permitted to visit in Oklahoma outside of our own. I had previously visited a number of points in the 'New Country,' at the request of Brother Smith. The State Board had authorized him to make use of me at any point in the territory that he might see fit. On this trip I visited the church that I had formally organized at Hydro, and gathered together a small company of Baptists at Arapaho. I also visited the church at Auxier and held a meeting with

Brother Haggard, the pastor. It was my purpose to visit Saddle Mountain Mission, as Miss Belle Crawford had so urgently invited me to do with a view to organizing a white church in that vicinity, but the flooded condition of the Washetaw River made it impossible for me to cross, and so I turned my course toward the homestead of Brother Smith. It was on the South Canadian River, about eighteen miles from El Reno. Here I left my jaded team, one of the horses being almost beyond going, and took a train from El Reno to Norman. The Norman Convention was a great meeting, showing a remarkable increase over the year before at Enid. Here I received by mail a copy of the minutes of our Northwestern Association and was proud in my speech to show it to the brethren as the record of the greatest association ever! At the close of the last night's session, dear Brother Smith spoke kindly of me and my work in the Northwestern District, and spoke of the giving out of one of my horses. In a very few minutes \$30 was raised by the brethren for the purpose of buying a new one, and this manifestation of the kindly interest of my brethren touched me deeply.

"From Brother Smith's home I made my way to Calumet and there found quite a number of Baptists; but the way was not open for an organization at that time. I also visited our Indian Mission at Watonga and had a most refreshing visit at the

home of Rev. Robert Hamilton, our missionary to the Cheyennes, as I had also at the home of Brother F. L. King, at his mission among the Arapahoes. I felt an unusual interest in our missions among these tribes, because I had been called upon as a soldier to fight them in the days of the Civil War. It was with no small satisfaction that I improved my opportunity at this time to serve them and in a measure make amends for my early indiscretions. Many of those who came to hear me preach were the same braves who, in that memorable battle on the plains, had fought for their lives. Their children and grandchildren were among those to whom I ministered, and some of the pleasant recollections of my career center about the days spent in their midst as a spiritual teacher and adviser. From Brother King I learned that Chief Left Hand lived in this vicinity. I had great anxiety to meet him but could not at that time.

“Although I was on the lookout for a pony all the way along on my return home, I was unable to find one until I reached Homestead in the southern part of Woods County. Here my failing pony actually staggered and stopped, and I bought of a farmer there the pony that the children of my district came to know as ‘Bright,’ and with ‘Beauty’ came to be as well known in my district, I think, as their driver.”

CHAPTER VI.

THROUGH NO MAN'S LAND.

Some time during the year 1902 Brother Tyson "proved up" on his claim, and in order that his family might be more comfortably situated, he moved them to Alva, Oklahoma. With this place as headquarters he would start out over his "field of magnificent distances," as he called it, and be gone many months in succession without seeing home and loved ones, in the meantime traveling hundreds of miles, organizing churches and holding meetings by the way.

Early in January, 1903, he received a letter from dear old sister Mary J. Hopps of Garrett urging him to come and organize a church and hold a meeting. The earnestness and pathos of the letter, and the great need of missionary work so vividly portrayed by the writer, deeply touched the kindly heart of the missionary and came as a true "Macedonian cry." Now, Garrett was at the extreme west end of what was once known as "No Man's Land"—a distance of nearly 300 miles from Alva.

In response to this urgent call he at once began planning a great missionary tour out through Wood-

ward County (now Woodward, Ellis and Harper Counties), and then across the full extent of "No Man's Land" (now Beaver, Texas, and Cimarron Counties); although a trip of more than 250 miles, and as he held many meetings by the way, both going and coming, it was many months before he reached home again. When we remember that this was midwinter in a comparatively new country, and that, too, one of the severest winters ever experienced in the Southwest, we can readily see it was no small undertaking even for a man "sixty years young," as he was pleased to put it. Distance, inclement weather and the innumerable difficulties to be encountered, were not matters to be considered by Missionary T. K. Tyson. With Paul he might say, "None of these things move me." Now right here permit us to say that one of the beautiful traits of the Tyson character was the happy, whole-hearted abandon with which he threw himself, soul and body, into the work. The thought that he was making a sacrifice never occurred to him, or if it ever presented itself he brushed it aside as unworthy of him. He was none of your long-faced martyrs who went about groaning because of the hardships of his lot. He never complained. He felt that he had the most delightful task in the world, and he would not have exchanged places with a millionaire or the President. His radiant smile, cheery laugh, and genuine wit and humor, bespoke the real gladness of his

heart. Being the "apostle of sunshine," it would not be extravagant language to say of him that he was the happiest man in the world. Nothing was more contemptible to him than for some admirer to try to pity or sympathize with him. If any company of people should so misunderstand him as to set him on a pedestal and attempt to lionize him as their suffering hero and missionary martyr, he would, to the great delight of all, break up the whole proceeding by stepping down, give a merry wink of the eye, shake hands all around, and create worlds of wholesome fun by his droll stories and laugh-provoking experiences, of which there seemed to be no end.

Just as he was starting on his long missionary trip with Garrett as his objective point, there befell him a delightful circumstance which must have helped to keep his heart, as well as his body, warm throughout that memorable journey. Rev. D. Noble Crane, at that time pastor at Woodward, graphically relates it thus:

"Brother Tyson drove into Woodward on one of his long tours of the country, driving 'Bright' and 'Beauty' to an open road wagon with no top, and ill prepared to travel in severe weather. He hitched his team on a cross street that ran by the old Brockhouse store and blacksmith shop, and went visiting about the town as was his wont. I saw the situation, took in his need, knew something of his

design to visit Beaver, Cimarron and Texas Counties, and so immediately started a subscription among my members to buy him a good heavy pair of pants and a good closed top for his buggy and have it all arranged before his return to the conveyance. I procured the top of Brockhouse and had him put it on the buggy and then hid among the implements in the store to await developments. In the course of two or three hours Brother Tyson returned and recognized 'Bright' and 'Beauty,' but the buggy was beyond him! His astonished remark, with a happy twinkle in his eye, was: 'It looks like somebody has been fooling with my outfit!' By a reference to a file of *The Woodward Bulletin* of that date it will be found that he made 'Some Remarks' on the occasion. It was always a pleasure to our people to minister to his wants, and no man was more welcome in our homes."

Shortly after this pleasant incident he started on his journey as happy as a lark in June. We quote the following from a news letter written by him February 13, and published in *The Word and Way*:

"From May, Woodward County, I pursued my long delayed journey through Beaver County. This is written from Garrett in the western end of the county, and I am ready to say that, physically, so far, it has been the hardest missionary journey

of my life. Truth to tell, I have sighed several full-grown sighs and shivered a good many shivers on the way. Yet the trip has had its pleasant side, and it is of this that I prefer to speak. A continual surprise greeted me all along the way in the comfortable homes and substantial improvements of the settlers. Most of the families visited came into the country from fifteen to seventeen years ago, in the days when an attempt was made to set up 'The Territory of Cimarron.' Only the most courageous have remained, and by turning their attention to stock raising, they have become quite prosperous. As far west as Tyrone many new homesteaders are now coming in."

At this point we will take up the thread of his story of that wonderful trip as he relates it in *The Northwestern Baptist*:

"From Tyrone I set out to finish my journey through 'No Man's Land,' then all known as Beaver County. I was very anxious to keep on the Oklahoma side of the Kansas-Oklahoma line; but as it was midwinter, all the brethren whom I met strongly advised me not to do so for the reason that for a distance of about seventy-five miles there was just one possible chance to find shelter over night, and this I would likely miss, as it was a cowboy's shanty some distance from the road. Accordingly I crossed over into Kansas and proceeded first to Hugoton,

where I stopped over night with the editor of the village paper. Although Hugoton is the county seat of Stevens County, it was then almost entirely deserted and had been since the terrible drouth of 1893-4. Many of the farms were entirely deserted and had been sold for taxes where purchasers could be found, and men were just discovering that here was a great field for speculation. Since that time this country has been largely rehabilitated and the farms have become quite productive.

“From Hugoton I made my way to Morgan’s Ranch, Mr. Morgan and family being very kind-hearted Baptists. From there my next possible stopping place was Porter’s Ranch, beyond the Cimarron River. That afternoon I saw a herd of eighteen or twenty antelope. Night came upon me just after I had crossed the Cimarron near Sand Wells, and I lost my way for a time, and it was about 10 o’clock at night when I heard the lusty yell of a cowboy, which was indeed very sweet music to my ears, for I knew I must be in the vicinity of the hearty welcome and warm shelter of Porter’s Ranch. Soon I was in the sod house of Mr. Porter. I found Mrs. Porter to be a very intelligent Baptist lady. Their sons and daughters were away at college. In Mr. Porter I found a very eccentric man, with exceedingly rough exterior, but a man whose kind hearted generosity knew no bounds, especially after he

learned that I had for many years been acquainted with our mutual friend, William Jennings Bryan. Many amusing stories were told me concerning the eccentricities of this frontiersman, but there is neither time nor space for them here.

“From this pleasant retreat I made my way on several miles further to the Point of Rocks Ranch on the north side of the Cimarron River. This was headquarters for one of the heaviest cattle concerns of all that region. From here on I found no trouble as to stopping places at convenient distances and so pursued my journey on up the Cimarron River to the Garret post office. This was indeed my point of destination, for I had received a letter from Mrs. Mary J. Hopps of Garrett, urging me to come up to that place with a view to organizing a Baptist church. Mrs. Hopps proved to be the mother-in-law of Mr. Charles Garrett, the proprietor of the Ranch. Here I found a welcome, indeed, and kindred spirits whom it was a joy to know. While on a visit with her people there Mrs. Hopps had become greatly interested in that community and was exerting a most wholesome influence among the people far and near.

“I must stop the narration of my own experiences to make mention of this remarkable character. At the age of seventeen Mrs. Hopps had married a young Baptist minister, I think in Indiana. Being

filled with the missionary spirit Brother Hopps and his young wife decided to go to the Pacific Coast, and, with a considerable company of people, made the journey of five months' duration with ox teams, enduring all the hardships incident to such a trip. They landed in California somewhere in the vicinity of Sacramento, and while others were busy prospecting for gold, these brave Christian pioneers were seeking for the souls of men, which were to them far better than gold. The story of their labors on the Pacific Coast was one of the most thrilling narrations of Christian enthusiasm and zeal to which I have ever listened. It is the wish of many of her friends that Mrs. Hopps might tell the story in a book written by herself. After many years of labor on the Coast, Brother Hopps and wife and family returned to the States and settled in Southern Kansas, where, after some years of labor, the husband and father died. But the widow went on with the noble work and was instrumental in building several houses of worship in that region. Later, she did a similar work in Arizona. Now she was in Oklahoma, and though past seventy years of age, was young in spirit and full of zeal for the Lord's cause. She could lead the prayer meeting, sing like a girl, and speak to the great edification of the people. And she had written to me to come to her assistance.

"Several very enjoyable meetings were held at the home of the Garrett's and at the 'ZH' school-

house three miles west of them, after which I pursued my journey up the Cimarron River to the village of Kenton in the northwest corner of Beaver County. Here also, I found some choice spirits and a church that had been organized some months before by Rev. B. F. Lawler, D.D., of Trinidad, Colo., who had come 125 miles at the invitation of the brethren there to organize a church. At this point I held meetings for several nights until a heavy snow storm rendered travel almost impossible. Here I was storm-stayed for three weeks and right glad I am to record the fact that I found most hearty welcome among the converted cowboys of that region as well as our brethren in the town. I would especially record my gratitude to Brother W. M. Eddy and family in Kenton, and Brother Shawhan and the Easley brothers in the country.

“After the special meetings at Garrett, following the organization of that church, I started on my return trip, following down the Cimarron River to the Point of Rocks Ranch. Here I was most cordially entertained for two or three days. From that point I took a dim road to the southeast until I struck a plainer road on the Flats, which ran near the line between Kansas and Oklahoma. Every ranch that I passed gave evidence of the awful loss of stock occasioned by the great snow storm. Dead cattle were seen lying in all directions, and the principal em-

ployment of the cowboys continued to be the finding and skinning of dead cattle. Every corral fence was covered with the skins taken. The first night out from the Point of Rocks I found shelter at the home of a big hearted cattleman who had been a great loser in the awful storm, but had made most heroic efforts to save the lives especially of the calves. When he took me to my room he said, 'Well, Elder, you will have to make out the best you can tonight without any straw in your bed, for every tick on the place was emptied in our efforts to save our stock. We also fed the calves every bit of oatmeal we had in stock and nearly all our corn meal and flour.' I could readily believe what he said about the bed ticks, for I rested the best I could on the slats covered by two or three blankets. There were no springs whatever on the bed and the reader may well imagine that when morning came, I was somewhat sore in spots, but the kindness of my new-made friend and his family knew no bounds, though I felt somewhat guilty to have my horses feeding on the scant supply of grain and fodder so sadly needed by his own horses and cattle, for many of them were so weak they could hardly stand alone. Indeed, several more dead ones were found among them that morning.

"I continued my journey in the southeasterly direction toward Guymon on the Rock Island Rail-

road. The scenes along the route continued to be just such as I have before described. At some of the cowboy shanties I found no one at home, but this made no difference. I unwound the string by which the cabin door was fastened and went in and proceeded to make myself at home, according to the unwritten law of that most hospitable people, the cattlemen. I finally reached Guymon and from there went south about eight miles from Frisco Creek where I found Rev. W. E. Hunter and a small settlement of Baptists, most of whom had come with him from Texas. My ponies, resenting the idea of being turned loose to feed on the bleak hills without grain, determined to go back to the ranches where they had fared better. Accordingly, I was left afoot for a time, but soon found a Baptist home at the Frisco Creek ranch, owned by Brother T. O. James, one of the most noble hearted brethren I have ever met. Brother James assisted me in the search for my ponies which we found fifteen miles back on the road over which we had passed. After a few days the Frisco Church was organized. Greatly refreshed by the kindness shown by Brother James and his family, I again took up my journey toward home."

This long trip is but a fair sample of many missionary tours made by Brother Tyson during those eventful years. We shall not attempt a detailed

account of the other trips but will give a snap shot of him at different times and places and under various conditions and circumstances.

CHAPTER VII.

FIRESIDE EVANGELISM.

AS A "chimney-corner preacher" Brother Tyson could not be excelled. He did a great work by his public ministrations, but the secret of his success was his ability to gain access to the homes and hearts of the people. Here he won their love and confidence and prepared them for his pulpit message.

Many interesting chapters might be devoted to these family-to-family visitations. There was scarcely a home in all the vast territory where he served as a district missionary in Oklahoma but enjoyed the benediction of his presence. He was as nearly omnipresent as it is possible for a man to be. He enjoyed the proud distinction of being the first Baptist preacher to call on every new settler and invite him and his family to a religious service. He delighted in telling us at associational meetings and elsewhere that he knew every Baptist by name in the country, and with a merry twinkle in his eyes to challenge all to find one he had not discovered, offering as a "wager" a Sunday School card to any one who should find a newly arrived Baptist before he did. Although he gave away

thousands of beautiful Sunday School cards, yet very few were "won from him" in this Baptist-finding contest.

Not only did Brother Tyson know everybody but, of course, about everybody knew him; and he was a welcome guest in every household. Especially was this true of all our Baptist homes, every one of which he laughingly called his "Baptist hotel." Most of these homes felt somehow that they each enjoyed the peculiar distinction of being his "favorite" stopping place and headquarters. Even to this day there goes up the proud claim from all over the field: "Why, Brother Tyson almost lived at our house." This may sound a trifle contradictory when we remember that there are hundreds of such homes, and furthermore, that Brother Tyson was almost constantly traveling over his field when not engaged in a protracted meeting. All this merely shows that our dear Brother Tyson had a way of making us all feel that he was really a part of our own particular family circle, just as if we were the only family in all the world; and not only that, but he enabled us all to feel that he was our *very own* particular, personal friend, as well as a friend to our own particular family. In other words, each household and each individual member of that household, *appropriated* him as their very own. That is why he is today

perpetuated in the lives of thousands of persons over whom he exerted such a great influence.

Perhaps the most beautiful of all the friendships existing between Brother Tyson and the people, was that which grew up between him and the frontier children. The fondness which this grand old missionary and the boys and girls whose homes he visited had for each other, forms one of the sweetest memories of those days. When the little ones saw "Bright" and "Beauty" approaching their home with Brother Tyson in his old buggy, their joy and enthusiasm knew no bounds. He remembered all their names and had a pleasant word and a jolly smile and a Sunday School card or some pretty souvenir for every one of them. He was never too tired or too busy to listen to their childish prattle and talk to them and tell them some story or repeat an amusing little rhyme. When Brother Tyson would drive up to the home of Pastor Crane, William Carey Crane, a little tow-headed boy four years old would run to meet him and usher him into the house. As soon as possible he would take his accustomed place on Brother Tyson's knee and say, "Brother Tyson, you and I should belong to the same Sunday School class, because *our hair is white just alike.*" Of course the venerable missionary agreed with Master William Carey, and greatly enjoyed the *striking resemblance* in the color of their hair!

When Brother Tyson came the babies would

stop crying, at least that was the general gossip that circulated among us. One day the home of the Enlows was resonant with infant wails. Baby Russell was screaming at the top of his voice. His good mother was doing all in her power to quiet him but her efforts were in vain. Just then Brother Tyson came in and with some peculiar antics began as follows:

Russell is mama's little calf,
When that's said that's half,
All he can do is just to ball,
When that's said that's all!

Russell thought that was very funny and he ran and jumped into Brother Tyson's arms, laughing with childish delight. And then the missionary would say:

No, Russell is not a calf,
But mama's little manny,
For he can smile and laugh
And be as sweet as candy.

Russell is now a young man and a member of a Baptist church.

In another home he captured the little boy of the household and incidentally won the hearts of the non-Christian parents, with the following:

A little old man went riding by,
Says I, Old man, your horse will die;
If he dies I'll get his skin,
And if he lives I'll ride him agin.

To the little boy's sister he taught the following :

Nelly was a baby, just three years old,
She kicked the covers off and got her footles cold.
Rover was a little pup,
He got the covers in his mouth and covered Nelly up.

Those children are now grown up, but those little rhymes abide with them as sweet memories of the dear old missionary who visited their frontier home and invited them to church and Sunday School in the little neighborhood school house.

In the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Scates Brother Tyson and the children had some glorious times together. Now Brother Tyson declared on all occasions, both in public and in private, that he did not snore in his sleep! Anybody who accused him of snoring just misrepresented him! One day Missionary Tyson came to Brother Scates', one of those famous "Baptist hotels," and as he was very tired from a long drive through a blizzard and a deep snow, he lay down on a comfortable cot for a nap. Soon he was fast asleep, and the peculiar noise he made with his heavy breathing sounded to some of the senior Scates terribly like snoring! Well, little Nelly, the baby and pet of the household, becoming very curious to see what was the matter with her dear old friend, toddled over to where he lay sleeping. After listening attentively for a few moments she exclaimed in confidence to her mama:

"Br'er Tity barky!" When Brother "Tity" awoke the little girl told him that he "barkyed when he slept." This so delighted Brother Tyson that he ever after, when accused of snoring (a very common accusation, by the way), told this story about little Nelly Scates and concluded with a chuckle: "That ought to end that slander forever! Brother Tyson don't snore, he '*barkies*' when he sleeps!"

Not only did the children and young people greatly enjoy and derive good from Brother Tyson's visits, but the grown-ups were made happy as well. We will conclude this chapter by giving in the words of our people, themselves, brief accounts of some of his many visits to their homes and communities. Mrs. M. J. Hopps, mentioned in the preceding chapter, tells the following incident:

"It was towards spring and during the heaviest snow storm of the season. The snow was about twenty inches deep. We heard a rap at the door, and when we opened the door there stood a man looking very cold. He asked, 'Does a Sister M. J. Hopps live here?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'Come in.' 'This is Brother Tyson,' he said by way of introduction. How gladly we received him into our home. As the snow was still falling he had to remain with us a week before he could do much. But, oh, how much we enjoyed the precious words that fell from his lips. He told us about the good meetings he had

held by the way and the churches he had organized. We also told each other of our life's work. We were both old and had great experiences to tell about."

One of the most sacred spots to Brother Tyson was the pleasant home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Miller, near Higley. His first visit to their community was before there were any school houses or churches in that section of the country. After he arrived at the home of Brother and Sister Miller they decided to have some meetings in the "Miller Grove," a beautiful timbered spot about the picturesque log house in which the family resided. The news that a "missionary" would preach in the grove was scattered among the neighbors, and a goodly number of the settlers came in wagons and on foot to the services. After a simple, earnest sermon, which was heard with deep interest, a basket dinner was eaten with much enjoyment under the shade of the trees. Thus began definite Christian work in that community, which has grown until now there are several Baptist churches within a radius of fifteen miles of the old Miller Grove. Mr. and Mrs. Miller, in speaking of Brother Tyson, say :

"We feel honored that this saintly man of God called our home one of his homes and often spent several days of rest, or 'repair,' as he called it, with us. As he drove in he would call out: 'Sister Miller,

have you any light bread?" Almost always I could favor him with this. Many pleasant evenings were spent with him present relating some of his experiences or helping to sing some familiar hymns; and last but not least, his earnest prayers were an inspiration to each member of the family."

Mr. M. C. Smith, Jr., now a Baptist pastor, says:

"I well remember Brother Tyson's first visit to our home. It was about the first of May, 1903, when he drove up to our house and asked if this was a 'Baptist hotel.' We told him it was a place where Baptists stayed; and then he laughingly told us that he was a Baptist preacher and missionary, and that his business was 'rounding up' the Baptists and organizing churches, etc. Well, we unhitched the 'missionary ponies'—'Bright' and 'Beauty'—and then father had to say, 'Brother Tyson, we are plumb out of feed.' 'That's all right, that's all right! There is plenty of Baptist grass there in the pasture, and Baptist ponies like that kind of grass', was the reply of this dear man of God. Then with a hearty laugh, we all walked to the house, seated ourselves as best we could, and the missionary began in his fatherly way to talk about the Lord and His work; and oh, what a thrill of joy it brought to our hearts there in that little old half dugout. The next morning he bade us good-bye and went on his way. Truly, he was about 'his Father's business.' The next fall

he came again bringing comfort and cheer, but he had not yet found enough Baptists to organize a church in our neighborhood. But by careful and prayerful efforts he had 'rounded up' enough to organize on Sunday, May 14, 1904. Brother Tyson preached in the dugout school house that morning from the text, 'They saw no man save Jesus only' (Matt. 17:8). I shall never forget that beautiful sunshiny morning. The face of the missionary seemed to light up with the very glory of heaven, as he began that matchless discourse in which he brought the message that thrilled all our hearts and made us feel as if we were on the Mount of Transfiguration and could see no man 'save Jesus only.' About 3 o'clock p.m. of that day, the Baptists all met at my father's home—a half dugout—and the Liberty Baptist Church was organized with twelve charter members, which the Lord wonderfully blessed until at one time she had eighty members. By the authority of this church two preachers—A. A. Armstrong and M. C. Smith—have gone forth to preach the Gospel to a lost world. So we see how Brother Tyson is still living in the hearts and lives of others."

Miss Edmona Case, writing of those pioneer days, says:

"Before we moved to our claim in Woodward County we lived near Deer Creek in Grant County,

Oklahoma. We held membership in the Victory Baptist Church. At the last meeting we attended there our missionary was present, and in his talk he remarked that there was only one missionary for all of Day, Woodward and Beaver Counties. As we expected to locate in Woodward County my mother remarked that 'if that is the case we will never see him, for he will never take the trouble to hunt up homesteaders scattered over the prairies.'

"Now, previous to our locating permanently on our claim, my father, Brother Bert and myself made a visit to it in a wagon. On our way over we met Rev. E. R. Williams who was moving to his claim near May, with a load of household goods, and as we all stopped at the same well to water the teams we made his acquaintance. He said he was a Methodist preacher.

"On the 8th of March, 1902, we moved to our claim with the entire family, household goods and all. Our residence consisted of a cave 7x8 feet, which my father had built on our former visit, and a small tent, and the wagons which were yet unloaded. On Sunday morning, about the first of April, 1902, a buggy drove up and two men got out and came toward the place where we had just started the walls of the sod house which was to be our future home. It was a nice day, and as we had nowhere to go we were just sitting around on

the sod wall and on the ground amusing ourselves as best we could. Brother Tyson walked up and introduced himself and Brother Williams, saying he was the missionary for the county, and that he was hunting up all the Baptist people he could find, concluding with the statement that he had met some one 'back there aways' who thought we were Baptists. My father told him that four of us were Baptists. By this time I had recognized Mr. Williams as the man we had met on a previous visit to our claim and I said to Brother Tyson, 'Did I understand you to say Brother Williams is a Baptist preacher?' 'Yes,' he replied. 'I believe I have met this man before as a Methodist preacher,' I said. 'Yes,' said Brother Tyson, 'he was once a Methodist preacher, but you know it takes a common pup nine days to get his eyes open, but Brother Williams being a little uncommon it took him longer! Yes, Brother Williams has turned Baptist, and as I baptized him myself *I know he is a Baptist!* And now we are going to preach at the Chaney school house this afternoon at 2 o'clock and we would like to have you all come over.' My father then said he 'didn't know how that would be as we didn't have the wagons unloaded, and besides he didn't think we could find clothes fit to wear to church.' Brother Tyson said, 'Come along that way, just as you are. I don't suppose there will be any one dressed up but Brother Williams and myself!' And I then

noticed that Brother Williams' head gear was a full twin to my father's! My mother then told Brother Tyson what she had said about never getting to see the missionary and now here he was just rushing in right on her before she even had a place to invite him into. (When he was sent some years later as a delegate to the Northern Baptist Convention at St. Louis he told that little incident to the great congregation and when he returned he told my mother of it.) He made several visits to our home and community, and on December 11, 1902, organized the Providence Baptist Church with nine members. Later he brought Albert Dale to us and introduced him and he became our pastor."

We regret that our limited space forbids the publication of more of these beautiful reminiscent letters from the old-time friends of the beloved Tyson. Thousands all over the land today rise up and call him blessed, and should we herein give place to all the rich and varied "appreciations" that have poured in upon us, we should have a book about the size of a Webster's unabridged dictionary. There is that noble old soldier of the cross, Rev. J. W. Laney, himself a pioneer preacher, who could tell us some precious recollections of his acquaintance with Brother Tyson. Rev. G. W. Bonner could tell an interesting story of how the missionary stopped him and his family in their "prairie schooner," on

their way to their claim, and said: "I am told you are a Baptist. Do you deny the charge?" Brother Bonner did not "*deny the charge*," but later became a charter member of the Unity Church which Brother Tyson organized. Rev. J. L. Odell, another pioneer and Tyson contemporary, could tell of how the missionary came to his house before he (Odell) became a preacher, "hunting for a Jonah" and found *him* and sent him on his way to "Ninevah" discharging his duty. This "Jonah" could also tell how the missionary set him straight on the close communion question by saying, "Did it ever occur to you that there was a New Testament church mentioned in the Bible?" Brethren J. A. Dale and B. F. Ballard could tell of how Brother Tyson was moderator of the council that ordained them, and as they were ordained together Brother Tyson ever after called them his "twin preachers." Not long after this Missionary Tyson found one of his beloved "twins" (Dale) running a threshing machine engine and devoting all his time to secular occupation. He captured the young preacher, got him into his buggy, and a few hours later, after some necessary "cleaning up," took him ten miles to the Providence Church and turned him loose in a revival meeting which resulted in the conversion of a number of persons, among them Miss Maud Richard, who afterwards became Mrs. Dale. Then Brother Ballard, the other "twin," could also tell of how Brother Tyson visited

himself and family many times in their "soddy," where he lived while he was pastor at Ivanhoe. He could also tell of how one day before Christmas their coal pile had vanished and the north wind was blowing bitter cold, when on the evening mail came a letter from the dear old missionary with an enclosure of \$5 for a "little Xmas cheer." And there is Mrs. Lura Burrows, a real Christian heroine, who could tell us about some very interesting visits Brother Tyson made to their home in order to lead her husband to Christ, and how, a little later, he baptized both her husband and herself; and how at a still later date he ministered so comfortingly to their sorrowing hearts at the funeral services of their little boy, Wane.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAYSIDE EVANGELISM.

IN IMAGINATION we can just see Brother Tyson now in his old buggy behind "Bright" and "Beauty" driving over the prairies of Northwestern Oklahoma, calling on the settlers in their pioneer homes, seeking out the scattered Baptists and organizing them into churches, and invariably leaving in every home and with every person he chanced to meet, a generous roll of good literature and the benediction of his fatherly smile. No man ever lived who came nearer to improving every possible opportunity of sowing the good seed of the Kingdom than did this grand old servant of God.

Through the agency of The Paper Mission (at that time at Wakefield, Massachusetts, but now located at Woodward, Oklahoma) he received large boxes and barrels of religious and temperance papers, magazines, Sunday School cards, etc., for free distribution. At night after a day of hard driving he would carefully sort out this precious literature and tie it in neat rolls or bundles—a *Word and Way*, *Standard*, *Examiner*, *Watchman*, *Western Recorder*,

Christian Herald, *Union Signal*, *Youth's Companion*, *Youth's World*, a tract or two, and a magazine, such as *Review of Reviews* or *World's Work*, etc. Wasn't that a rich feast for hungry minds and hearts in the dugouts, soddies and shacks of the frontier? With his buggy full of these rolls of literature—seed corn he called it—he would start out on an extended missionary tour of his field of “magnificent distances.” To everybody he met by the wayside he gave a roll of papers accompanied with a smile and kind word; into every home he went he left a bundle of his blessed literature; if he did not have time to stop at a house he would throw a roll into the yard, or by the mail box if he happened to be on a rural mail route, and then greatly rejoice to see the children run out and fall over each other trying to see who could be first to get the papers. If he made a journey of a hundred or two hundred miles across the country, you could literally track him by his “scatteration” of literature; if he held a protracted meeting he sowed the community down with good reading; if he drove into a feed yard to water and feed “Bright” and “Beauty,” he would put a roll of papers in every buggy and wagon; if he took a trip on the train he carried a grip full of these rolls of papers which he threw out of the car window when passing gangs of section men, who would scramble like children in their eagerness to get them. Millions upon millions of pages of wholesome reading

matter were thus scattered broadcast by this blessed saint, as he toiled and sacrificed as a missionary for so many years in Western Nebraska and Northwestern Oklahoma.

Once when stopping for the night in our humble frontier home, we ventured to ask the dear old man if he knew of any real good coming from this literature distribution. He turned those kindly eyes upon us in pained surprise, as if our interrogation insinuated a doubt. But in a moment his face illumined with that characteristic smile, as he said: "The promise is that 'he that goeth forth bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.' " Then he told us of incident after incident, which had come under his personal observation, of people who had been blessed, and some who were even converted, by this ministry. We have never again doubted the wisdom of this wayside evangelism. Doubtless thousands will rise up in heaven and thank "Father" Tyson, not only for his sermons and personal conversations, but for the good literature which he placed in their hands or left in their homes or at their mail box or in their front yard.

There is on file in the Paper Mission office the following interesting story of Missionary Tyson,

which has been given wide publicity in the religious press of America:

"The missionary was making his usual round of visits among the settlers on Camp Creek, a churchless and Christless community. Late in the afternoon he drove up to the door of a little sod house, a one-room affair (and not a large room at that), the walls of which were made of sod gathered from the prairie and plastered with gypsum. Few of the necessities and none of the luxuries of life were possible to its occupants, but they were 'given to hospitality' none the less. Like their neighbors, they gladly shared their possessions with any traveler who might happen their way. The children, four mischievous boys and two lively girls, ran out gleefully to bid the missionary welcome, and the two dogs barked in glad accord. Attracted by the noise the parents appeared and added their cordiality to that of the others.

"The missionary must needs spend the night somewhere, so the hospitality of the one-room shack was shared with the man and wife, the six children and the two dogs. After a plain but substantial supper they all gathered around the old cook stove which hungrily devoured the corn stalks and broom corn seed that was fed to it.

" 'Well, boys, what do you have to read these long evenings?' the missionary asked with interest.

“ ‘Nothin’ much,’ replied the oldest one, ‘wish we had.’

“ ‘Oh, we got a book about Jesse James,’ piped up a younger boy, ‘and some detective stories,’ and he hurried to get them for the missionary’s inspection.

“The missionary went out to his buggy and soon returned like Santa Clause with his pack. How anxiously the children crowded about him and how wistfully the parents looked on from a more respectful distance. There were rolls of Sunday School papers, some helpful magazines, a book or two, a Testament apiece and a Bible, of course. How eagerly they accepted each gift and how profusely they thanked him.

“ ‘Oh, I’m only distributing agent,’ the missionary laughed. ‘Your thanks are due the Paper Mission. They sent the box of reading matter I’m carrying with me on this trip, but I’ve still better news for you. I’ll send your name to one of their members and every little while you’ll receive some more by mail.’

“So over his large field the missionary went repeating the experience all along the way. Hundreds of names of families he visited were sent to the superintendent of the Paper Mission who in turn

saw to it that each of these families were kept supplied constantly with good reading."

There is suggested here in the life of this missionary of the cross a lesson which every Christian might put in practice. There are multiplied opportunities of scattering seed by the wayside, which are not being improved. Every Christian might become a tract distributor among the unsaved and find a wonderful field of usefulness. Who does not have some good reading which might be "passed on" to others? There are thousands of homes, especially on mission fields and in isolated communities, which would be thankful for such ministry, and eternity alone can measure the good results attending such efforts. If you know of no such families the Paper Mission will gladly furnish you with name and address and simple instructions for conducting the work, if you will apply to them.

Think of what opportunities the country pastor has of engaging in "wayside evangelism," as Missionary Tyson did, as he drives to and from his appointments and visits the members of his churches. Yes, and associational missionaries, missionaries among miners, Indians, etc., have in this way splendid opportunities of increasing their usefulness. Such persons desiring boxes of literature for distribution may obtain the same free of cost by applying to the Paper Mission.

CHAPTER IX.

A WANDERING MISSIONARY.

NO PREACHER among us was more before the public than Brother T. K. Tyson. Almost every night, and on special occasions many times during the day, he preached or lectured or delivered an address or conducted a prayer meeting. There was scarcely a church, schoolhouse or grove in all of Northwest Oklahoma in which he did not at some time or other hold a religious service. If he was not conducting a revival meeting he would probably be making a tour of the field and, like Paul of old, "confirming the churches" which he had recently organized.

He assisted in a great many fifth Sunday meetings, ordinations, dedications, annual associations, missionary rallies, Sunday School institutes and other meetings of a similar character. In these general meetings he was a wonder. Although in time there came to be a great many preachers among us, we continued to look to him as our leader and chief inspiration. He was invariably ready with an interesting and helpful talk on any subject that might be assigned to him. It mattered not how

short the notice, or how limited the time might be for preparation, he was sure to have something to say that was well worth hearing. His keen wit, sunshiny spirit, familiarity with human nature and inexhaustible storehouse of anecdote and illustration, made him tremendously popular as a public speaker and leader. During the whole time (six years) that he was district missionary, he was elected from year to year to serve as moderator of the Northwestern Baptist Association, a position he filled to the satisfaction of the entire brotherhood. Our people came to regard him as indispensable, and never once was there a rival candidate to the chairmanship or the missionary work to which he was unanimously elected at each annual association. If any preacher ever became jealous of Brother Tyson, or if anybody ever became his enemy, we never heard of it.

While Missionary Tyson never had personal enemies, yet there were people who sometimes stood in the way of the cause he was trying to advance. Generally, such persons were of the anti-mission, anti-progressive type, whom Brother Tyson regarded with mild contempt. Although he did not exactly scold or criticise them, yet with a twinkle in his eye he would convulse his audience with laughter by impersonating these old mossbacks as "members of the ancient order of yankbacks who lived in the objective case, kickitive mood." Sometimes he spoke of

them as "poor ignorant fools for the want of sense," and the more militant ones he dubbed "bushwhackers and free-lancers."

The relations between Brother Tyson and his preacher brethren was most cordial. Their love and respect for each other was mutual. We all regarded him as a father and tried to be "dutiful children." To young pastors his wise counsel and words of encouragement were a benediction. He never lost an opportunity to say a good word in behalf of his co-workers. In his numerous newspaper accounts of his work he frequently made favorable mention of the different brethren on his field.

He was a wonderful help to the various denominational leaders in their work in this district. By way of illustration we make special mention of Mr. J. L. Rupard, the Oklahoma Sunday School missionary of the American Baptist Publication Society. This indomitable worker found the services of Missionary Tyson indispensable. Tyson and Rupard were a great team. We have in mind a series of Sunday School institutes which Mr. Rupard had arranged for the Northwestern Association, necessitating a trip by team of nearly two hundred miles. In writing of this trip Mr. Tyson says:

"My faithful horse, 'Beauty,' was given a rest, and with a fresh 'buckskin' pony, borrowed from

Deacon A. L. Scates of Indian Creek Church, in her place, the journey was made. We began with the Hackberry Church, December 2, holding till Sunday noon, the 4th. That afternoon and night snow fell to the depth of seven or eight inches. Our next meeting was at Shattuck, more than thirty miles away. This drive was made on Monday, our ponies breaking the road most of the way. The brethren at Shattuck had about despaired of our getting through, but at 6:30 p. m. we reached the Hotel Bigelow and were at the church house on time for the opening session that night. Another long drive on Wednesday brought us to Ivanhoe in Beaver County. Still another forced march, on Friday, brought us to May in Woodward County. From that point another conveyance was furnished Brother Rupard to Gage, the nearest railroad point, leaving this missionary to preach at May, Sunday forenoon, and at Solon that night. I got back to Indian Creek, and thence to Woodward, just in time to escape another and heavier snow storm. In all these institutes and conventions Brother Rupard shows himself to be a master workman of whom we are all proud. His labors in our Association are bearing fruit in raising the standard of our Sunday Schools and increasing the efficiency of our workers. God bless him in his work. It is a pleasure to be his traveling companion and helper in such meetings. The American Baptist Publication So-

ciety devised a wise thing for us when they gave us J. L. Kupard to Oklahoma."

In this connection we want to mention a missionary rally and Sunday School institute which was held with the Tyrone Baptist Church, as it gives a splendid side-light on the work Brother Tyson was doing all over his large field at that time. The date was December 31 to January 4, 1904. The weather was very cold and not many persons braved the storms of winter to be present, but the Lord made it a glorious occasion. Rev. G. T. Colvin, pastor of the church, had the following to say about it in *The Word and Way*:

"Elder T. K. Tyson, our missionary of Northwestern Oklahoma Association, acted as moderator. I met this dear brother almost twenty years ago in Southwest Iowa and have been watching his movements ever since. He rendered splendid service while here. His two telling lectures on temperance greatly aroused the people against the rum traffic. Northwestern Oklahoma Association is making no mistake in keeping such a man on the field. He has been on the western borders about all his life. For a man of his age it is a mystery to some of us the amount of work he is accomplishing in the name of the Lord."

We have had so little to say about the home life of Brother Tyson that we fear the reader will

get a very one-sided idea of this grand and useful man. While he did not have time to go to his Alva home more than about once every two or three months, on an average, and could remain with his family only two or three days at a time, yet he loved that home and its precious inmates with all the devotion of his great loyal heart. His children were now all grown up and, with the exception of Joy, his youngest daughter, were out in the world establishing homes of their own. His lawyer son, Frank, of whom he was very proud, lived in Brooklyn, N. Y. Otis and Jay were in San Francisco, and when the terrible earthquake came upon that great city "Father" Tyson almost worried himself to death until word came that his children were safe. Mr. and Mrs. Tyson were true lovers always. He gave her much of the credit for his success in his work. He always spoke of her reverently as his "best girl." He longed to be with her more. In the early spring of 1905, as the May anniversaries of the Northern Baptist Societies approached, he became possessed of a great longing to attend that great meeting, which was to be held at Dayton, Ohio, that year, and take his "best girl" with him. But his salary was so small and his finances so low that it seemed quite out of the question.

One day he visited us in our little shack near Mutual. Scarcely had he gotten into the house than

he began to breathe out his longing desire to attend the Northern Baptist Convention. With a comic expression on his face he said, "You know I can't hint, but I do so much desire to take my 'best girl' to that great meeting. We have not gone together to a great Baptist doings for many a day, and we want to take a honeymoon trip. But how can we afford it? I wonder if my friends wouldn't like to have my photograph?"

This last question, which was made in mock seriousness and really meant as a jest, gave me a suggestion, and after much laughing and fun-making, I said, in all seriousness, "Brother Tyson, I want you and your 'best girl' to attend the May Anniversaries, and if you will let me sell your photo I think I can, with the co-operation of the other brethren of the Association, arrange the matter all right."

It is doubtful whether he took the matter very seriously, but he laughingly said, "Well, Brother Loving, you are a wonder!"

At Mutual, two miles east of our home, lived our brother, Roy R. Loving, a photographer. We took Brother Tyson to his gallery and succeeded in getting a very good picture of him. Our brother made them at cost—600 of them—and they went like hot cakes. Everybody who knew Brother Tyson wanted a picture of him and were delighted to learn they could get a good one for the small price

of 25 cents, and since they knew that about twenty cents out of every quarter would be applied on a fund to send the dear old missionary to the great meeting he so much wanted to attend, they were doubly glad of the opportunity to buy them. In about a month we were able to turn over to our treasurer some \$85 (above cost of photos) to be used in defraying the expenses of our beloved missionary to the Anniversaries. It was one of the proudest moments of our lives, and it goes without saying that Brother Tyson was gratified.

He was as joyous as a boy, when the time came to start on that wonderful journey in company with his "best girl." They started about two weeks before the meeting of the Convention at Dayton so they would have time to visit some old landmarks on the way. Each week during their absence he had an article under the caption of "A Wandering Missionary," in *The Word and Way*. As most of the Baptist families on his mission field took this paper they read these weekly letters from Brother Tyson with great interest. As no better report of those days can be given than his own write-up of the matter we shall quote freely from these letters. He says:

"To write intelligently while on the go, there's the rub. May 1, I left Alva, Oklahoma, on my long-talked-of trip. My first stop was rather accidental,

at Belleville, Kansas. Here I attended the prayer-meeting, where I found Peter, James and John and Mary and Martha, who are always there. At Western, Saline County, Nebraska, I had a delightful meeting with fellow-workers of other days. I was twice pastor here, and went from there to Oklahoma. Three hours in Lincoln gave me a chance to see many of my old-time acquaintances and to hear good news about our cause in that capital city. At Palmyra, Otoe County, another former pastorate, I spent Sunday, May 6, preaching morning and evening for Pastor Keyser, who has just come among them. With dinners and receptions and hand shakes which sometimes developed into hugs, the brethren made us loath to pull away from them. Two married daughters live at Palmyra, and our Joy will spend the summer with them. Two hours between trains at Nebraska City were pleasantly spent by the missionary and his 'best girl' with Pastor J. W. Merrill and wife. Our next stop was at Russell, Lucas County, Iowa, where Rev. A. H. Stote is pastor. Twenty-one years ago I had left this splendid people and this was our first opportunity to visit them since. Sunday, the 13th, was spent with them and our eyes were dimmed with tears of joy as we greeted each other and recounted the experiences of long ago. Monday night we spent at Belleville, Illinois, with Pastor J. W. Greathouse and his people to whom he has just come from Louisville Seminary.

This good church is greatly interested in our Oklahoma work, especially in the work of Rev. J. L. Odell. Tuesday evening, the 15th, we reached Dayton, Ohio, to attend the Anniversaries, and from here I will write again if I do not get lost in the crowd."

The Dayton meeting was one of great importance and, of course, the Tysons enjoyed every moment of it. After the Convention adjourned they did not return to Oklahoma but continued their "wanderings," of which Brother Tyson wrote as follows:

"A day train from Dayton to Buffalo, N. Y., gave us a very delightful trip. The next day we visited Niagara Falls. After the manner of the wealthy we employed an automobile for the trip of fourteen miles. It is my deliberate opinion that no living word painter can adequately portray these mighty cataracts. When he has done his best, he would be painfully aware that a thousand dashes and splashes and roars and torrents had been left out. What right has any American to live and die without seeing the falls of Niagara? An English tourist said to us: 'You in America have all the grand sights. England has nothing.'

"But our best day, so far, was the trip on the day boat *Albany* from Albany to New York. It was a day of perpetual delight. I always knew that the Hudson River was famous for its beautiful

scenery, but it must be seen to be comprehended. The points of historic interest also claim the attention and admiration of every lover of our country. Many of these towns were started before the Revolutionary War."

We pause here to state that while Brother Tyson and his companion were on this delightful trip, they did not forget their many Oklahoma friends but sent post card messages to them which were highly treasured by all the recipients. One of these precious communications inspired Rev. L. W. Marks to write the following beautiful paragraph which appeared in *The Word and Way*:

"From the beautiful side-wheel steamer, *Albany*, on the Hudson River comes a brief message from Rev. T. K. Tyson of Northwest Oklahoma. He says: 'With my "best girl" I am gliding down the Hudson. Will be with my lawyer son in Brooklyn tonight.' Happy servants of God. Time and times and half a time, they have earned that trip. Blessings on the folks who made it possible for them to go. Sweethearts they have been for many years. A happy, restful little home at Alva, Oklahoma, is theirs, but short visits with weeks, and even months between, tell the story of the missionary's sacrifice. What an opportunity has come to them. For weeks together they will visit with each other and get acquainted. The very hours required for sleep will

seem like so much precious time lost. Many a globe-trotter will spend fifty thousand dollars for one-tenth of the joy that will flow through their loving hearts on that little trip. Before me is a picture of the *Albany*. On the crowded deck of that proud steamer I see a white haired man and sweet faced woman. Hand in hand they slowly trace the promenade; they are courting as in the days of old, but I am not listening; I shall not mention the loving caress, and my smile, as I meet them, will not be audible enough to betray my eaves-dropping nor disturb their cherished secret. What a refreshing breeze of enthusiasm will sweep over Northwest Oklahoma when their faithful Missionary returns with high heart to his God-appointed work."

With this pleasant interruption we will now proceed with our quotations from the writings of "a wandering missionary." He continues:

"We were met at New York by our son, and it took over an hour by street car to reach his home at 1025 East Nineteenth Street, Brooklyn. But we saw a great deal of Greater New York on the way. Since then we have visited many points of interest, among them Chinatown, Italy and the missions in that vicinity. We saw opium smoking in all its repulsiveness. We have also visited Columbia University, Grant's tomb, Central Park, the aquarium, Coney Island and the mission there. Here

there is a world's fair of amusements and attractions running day and night, and multitudes of pleasure seekers swarm them continually. By them every Lord's day is turned into a holiday. We think we have great problems confronting us in the West, and we have, but the greatest problem of which I know anything is the problem of how to reach the unsaved millions in our great cities. It is refreshing to see what is being undertaken in this direction.

"I have attended the Baptist Ministers' Conference of Long Island, where I spoke briefly. The American Baptist Home Mission Society, with headquarters here, has taken charge of me, and for them I have made a trip up the Hudson and spoke at an association at Glens Falls. Here I met former acquaintances in the persons of Dr. M. H. Pogson, a pastor in St. Louis; Dr. C. H. Moscrip, and Rev. T. S. Leonard. While in that region I visited Lake George and Saratoga, as well as Troy and Albany. On my return I spoke at Rhineback, where Rev. L. A. Mitchell, in whose ordination I took part at Beatrice, Nebraska, fifteen years ago, is pastor. This church is greatly interested in our work in Oklahoma. I also attended a Woman's Missionary meeting of Southern New York Association, at Yonkers. Nearly 400 ladies were in attendance. This week I am to speak at an association at Prattsburg. Yesterday I spoke in the morning at Bush-

week Avenue Church, Brooklyn, and Dr. T. J. Whitaker and his people stood it so well that they invited me to speak at their Children's Day exercises in the evening. This Sunday School, in all its departments, numbers about 1,000.

"On the 13th of June, my 61st birthday, I spoke at the Yates' Association meeting at Prattsburg in Western New York. These New York associations surprise me with their Western style of serving dinner and supper at the meeting house. I find no lack of warmth and hospitality among them. Sunday, the 17th, I spoke at Morristown, New Jersey, in the forenoon, and at Yonkers, New York, in the evening. So you will see I am in no danger of rusting out during this resting spell. But I like this way of taking vacations.

"My impressions of New York City would be hard to express. I think that even the natives can hardly comprehend the vastness of Greater New York. Think of a city that covers four entire counties and part of the fifth! To say that there are 4,000,000 people in the city does not express it, for there is another million living outside that come into town daily to do business. How can God's people reach this vast multitude with the Gospel?—a question yet unsolved. Yet they are facing the problem and doing what they can. If time permits, I am planning to visit as many as possible of the

missions that are being maintained all over the city."

Finally, that memorable vacation of several weeks came to an end and Mr. and Mrs. Tyson returned to Oklahoma. It was their first real vacation in many years, and to say that they enjoyed it immensely is to put it mildly. Most of us think of a vacation as a time to cease from work, and we become persons of leisure, but not so with Brother Tyson. When he found himself very much in demand by the Home Mission Society and those Eastern churches that wanted him to speak of his pioneer missionary experiences, he did not disappoint them. He saw in this a providential opening for the most glorious vacation time of his life, and he improved the opportunity. But the change was restful and he came back to his Oklahoma field refreshed and ready for some of the most strenuous work of his life.

Words fail to express the joy we all felt at having him among us again. He went about just the same common, unassuming Brother Tyson that he had always been. With a great deal of pretended pomp and gusto he told us in a public address of how stilted and dignified he felt and how "strutful" he had become since speaking in those great Eastern churches, but we exploded with laughter at the thought. The very idea of our Missionary putting

on airs and assuming aristocratic ways was highly amusing. But we were all proud of him, and we did not try to conceal the fact. We now saw clearly from the manner in which he was received by the cultured folks of the great Eastern cities what we had already suspected, that our own Brother Tyson was a truly great man and a remarkably interesting character.

He continued his labors among us with much success for a year or two longer; but the Home Mission Society had their eyes on him, for they had discovered in him some marvelous possibilities of inspiration to Eastern churches, associations, and conventions. They saw that while his services were of great value to his present field of labor, yet he had talents which would be vastly more important to the cause of missions if he should be employed as their special representative to travel and speak to the old established churches of the North and East.

So it came to pass that when the program was arranged for the Northern Baptist Convention to meet in St. Louis, in May, 1906, our Brother Tyson was down for an address on "Pioneering in Oklahoma." Again our Missionary and his "best girl" were to attend the great anniversary meetings, and again his joy knew no bounds, for not only was he to attend the Northern Baptist meetings, but he was also to attend the meeting of the Southern Baptist

Convention which met that year in Kansas City. This time his expenses were to be paid by the Home Mission Society, and he was to have the privilege of again speaking at several important places after the meetings closed. He was justly proud of the well deserved honor that had come to him. In speaking of this he said:

“I was ‘strutful’ over the prospects of going to the Kansas City and St. Louis Baptist gatherings—yes, ‘strutful’—that is the word that tells it! And better than all Mrs. Tyson is to accompany me. It is one of the most pleasant experiences of my ministerial life to see how eager all our brethren are to have us enjoy this great treat.”

CHAPTER X.

A MISSIONARY IN EXILE.

AT THE Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City Brother Tyson gave an address in which he presented the needs of his field and the triumphs of his brethren. In his remarks he stated that out of the forty churches he had organized in Oklahoma, only seven had meeting houses.

At the Northern Baptist meeting in St. Louis he made a great speech which thrilled the large assembly of representative Baptists. The sight of the happy, magnetic face of the aged missionary captured the great audience before he had spoken a word. He began his address on "Pioneering in Oklahoma" with the impromptu statement that, as the building in which he was about to speak was a trifle larger than the school houses in which he was accustomed to preach, it would first be necessary to adjust his voice to suit the occasion. "Now," he exclaimed in a voice clear and distinct, "if you people at the back of this auditorium and up in the gallery can't hear me place your hands to your ears and I will speak louder, but if you can hear me all right, I will reserve my lung powers for more useful

purposes on the Oklahoma frontier." A waving sea of handkerchiefs and ripples of applause satisfied him that all could hear and also that he was on good terms with his auditors. Then in that easy and unconventional style so characteristic of him, he held the people spellbound with a fifteen-minute speech. Among other things he said:

"In prosecuting my work I have worn out three horses and badly shattered two buggies. For the first nine months I was practically alone. Since then the Lord of the harvest has added a small company of the most self-denying laborers I have ever known. In some instances their families have been reduced to bread and water while the husband and father was away holding meetings. Sometimes these brethren have been so poorly clad that they have hesitated to attend our own associational meetings. One brother borrowed a suit from an infidel neighbor to attend his first fifth Sunday meeting with us. One of our strongest brethren is obliged to teach school a part of the year to support his family. God only knows the privations endured that are never spoken of. For the first two or three years most of the homesteaders are obliged to be absent from home a large part of the year to earn a livelihood; hence their inability to support their pastors. With all this they do what they can and do not fail to develop the missionary spirit. As a rule their homes

are of the most primitive kind, but gradually better dwellings appear, with orchards and flowers, as the cultivated fields begin to bring forth crops. Altogether, Northwestern Oklahoma presents the most promising and exhilarating mission field I have ever seen. It is simply a question of speed and physical endurance to keep pace with its ever-increasing demands. I plead for better support for the men we have and for more men of the same self-denying zeal and energy."

Whether he had intended it or not this address of the Oklahoma Missionary began immediately to bear fruit. At the close of that session of the Convention a wealthy Baptist from Dayton, Ohio, rushed forward and grasped Brother Tyson warmly by the hand, and although a stranger, greeted him most cordially. He invited Mr. Tyson to go with him to his room at a nearby hotel. After they were seated the gentleman said: "Mr. Tyson, I was much interested in your address and especially so in what you said about those self-denying mission pastors. Will you please oblige me by distributing a little money among them?"

Brother Tyson in speaking afterwards of this event said: "When the good man said this I felt a strange choking sensation in my throat, and for a moment I could not speak, but when I saw him writing a check for \$200 I managed to say, 'My name

is Dennis. I shall be glad to accommodate you! Oh, what visions of comfort and cheer for our struggling preachers did I behold in that check."

Well, in due time every preacher in the bounds of our great frontier association—every mother's son of us—received his prorata share of that generous check, and we can all give personal testimony that in almost every instance it came just in the nick of time to help in some financial emergency. From that day to this the thought of what that kindly Ohio Baptist layman did for us through the agency of our beloved Missionary makes a warm feeling in our hearts and brings tears of gratitude to our eyes.

Before Brother Tyson returned from the St. Louis meeting he had an amusing experience which he greatly delighted to tell to his Oklahoma friends. He occupied a conspicuous place among the "big guns" of the Convention. The Moderator, or some person of equal prominence, sent Brother Tyson on an errand to his hotel across the street. Of course, this necessitated his vacating a very desirable seat in a place where even standing room was at a premium. He went hurriedly and hatless, for it was about time for the opening of the session. When he returned the great auditorium was packed and jamed, and the door was closed as no more people could be admitted. Indeed the ushers had received orders to admit no one under any circumstances.

Now here was an embarrassing situation. At one of the doors a blooming young usher met our heroic Missionary with an emphatic, "No, sir; can't let you in."

"But," exclaimed Tyson, "this is an exceptional case."

"Sorry, old fellow, but can't help it," was the curt reply of the bright youth.

"Yes, but," expostulated the old "war horse" from the Western plains, "My hat is in there! I must go in and get my hat!"

With a broad grin the skeptical young man said: "Well, that's a good one! But you can't play that game on me!"

Seeing that his arguments were unavailing he quietly went to another entrance which he found carefully guarded by an old man. He asked to be admitted. "Can't do anything for you, brother. The seating capacity is taxed to its utmost and we have already been compelled to turn away hundreds of persons equally as anxious to enter as yourself."

"But look here," urged Elder Tyson from the Oklahoma prairies, "I have already been in there and I was sent by Dr. ——— after his speech which he forgot and left at his hotel, and he is the first speaker on the program; he *must* have that import-

ant document at once. And, besides, my hat is in there, and I *must* have my hat."

The old door-keeper winked and smiled broadly and said, "You are all right, but don't tell them I let you in"; and then to his immense relief and satisfaction the Missionary from out West found himself once more inside. Pressing his way through the throng he finally reached his seat at the front which he found had been reserved for him.

When the St. Louis meeting adjourned, in company with Mrs. Tyson, he took some side-trips in which he addressed the people, as on his previous vacation, in the interest of mission work in the West in general and Oklahoma in particular. After some weeks touring the East he returned to Northwestern Oklahoma and continued to serve as our missionary until the summer of the following year (1907), at which time he resigned to become the special representative of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the author of this sketch was elected by the association as his successor.

It was with the deepest regret that the Baptists of Northwest Oklahoma parted with their faithful missionary. We were like a large family of orphan children. Yet, while we keenly felt our own loss, we sincerely rejoiced over his well earned promotion and vied with each other in our congratulations. The crowning work of his life had been done

among us, and we had every reason to be proud and thankful that God had sent him to be here for so many years, and now we tried to be comforted by the fact that his hardships were at an end and that his services would be more valuable than ever in promoting the cause of missions.

In going from us Brother Tyson had feelings of mingled sadness and pleasure—sadness at the thought of leaving his old friends and the work he loved, and pleasure at the prospect of enlarged opportunities of doing good which his new work opened to him. He never ceased to have yearnings for his Oklahoma field and for his old-time associates. To the end of his life he wrote and spoke of himself as “a missionary in exile.” He always had a sort of homesick feeling and made as many visits to Oklahoma as his opportunities afforded. After he had served the Society for a year as district secretary and special representative, he said: “I enjoy the work every day, every minute. But, somehow, every little while there comes a longing for the old days in the West, for the great wide prairies, for the dear people who in a great measure are shut off from the spiritual privileges and advantages enjoyed by those in older settled communities and among whom there is a crying need of toilers.”

Although he left behind him most of the hardships and privations of a missionary life, yet it was

no light task that he undertook when he went from us. It was a "man's job," and it meant toil and sacrifice. The work assigned him was such as to require all the energies of a strong, healthy body, a master mind, as well as a great heart and special fitness for the work. His four or five years of service in that capacity proved that he was in every way equal to the undertaking. We shall not go much into detail or recount in chronological order the events of these swiftly passing years. The best we can do is to give a few glimpses of him, that the reader may, with the aid of the imagination, form a fairly clear idea of the nature of his work and his manner of performing it.

He was first appointed field secretary of the New England district, with headquarters at 590 Rogers Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. Under the caption of a "Missionary in Exile," he wrote of some of his early labors in the employ of the Society. He says:

"After the meeting of the Monroe Association at Rochester, N. Y., I had many invitations to speak in the churches of the city and vicinity. So I spoke at the Meigs Street Church Sunday morning and at the First German Church at night. At 12:15 I visited the famous Hubbell Bible Class at the First Church. This great class was founded and built up by Mr. Hubbell, a Baptist lawyer. It has an enrollment of 738 and an average attendance of 220.

At this session there was an attendance of 215; it was a rainy day. The class is thoroughly organized and must be a power for good in that city.

“On Monday I attended chapel service at the University of Rochester and, by invitation of President Rush Rees, spoke to the students. At the close of my labored effort I was greeted with their college yell with an Oklahoma attachment. With a high step I went from the great hall over to the Rochester Theological Seminary, a half dozen blocks away, for President A. H. Strong had previously invited me to address the theological students. Several of these young men expressed to me a desire to go West after graduation. I was impressed with the superior quality of these young preachers, and am sure that giants are among them. I am to return to Rochester in the near future to speak in several other churches.

“Both at Rochester and at Buffalo I was impressed with the deep spiritual tone of the meetings and with the earnest evangelical spirit of the ministry. No stiffness or starchiness was manifest among them.”

Mr. Tyson was tremendously popular all over the East and was constantly in demand for sermons, lectures and addresses in the large city churches. Many interesting items may be gathered from the numerous newspaper reports and announcements of pulpit committees. In the *Church Calendar* of

the First Baptist Church of Patterson, New Jersey, we find the following announcement under date of November 18, 1906:

"The preacher of the morning is Rev. T. K. Tyson, of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. He is assisting Dr. McBride for a time by speaking in the large churches in New York and vicinity. He comes not only to proclaim the good news of salvation, but to tell us of some of the triumphs of the Gospel and to acquaint us with the workings of our Home Mission Society."

Under date of May 1, 1907, the pulpit committee of the First Baptist Church of Summit, N. J., makes the following announcement:

"Next Sunday, May 5th, the Rev. T. K. Tyson of Oklahoma Territory will preach for us, both morning and evening. Mr. Tyson has labored for about thirty years in the far West, and is familiarly known as the 'Old War Horse,' who has worn out four horses and buggies in his strenuous work throughout the West. Mr. Tyson is in great demand to preach in the large churches in New York City, and we may consider ourselves fortunate in being able to secure him for the entire day next Sunday. We are sending this notice to you, as we do not wish you to miss the pleasure of hearing this remarkable man."

When Brother Tyson's Oklahoma friends read

the following announcement in a city paper they could not refrain from smiling at the distinguished and high-sounding title of "Doctor" which is given him:

"A treat is awaiting the people of Everett in the coming to this city of Dr. T. K. Tyson, who is known by his denomination as the 'Home Mission Cyclone,' and who will occupy the pulpit of the First Baptist Church next Sunday, morning and evening. Dr. Tyson is said to be a rare genius in story telling and has had an experience in pioneer and frontier work which he tells about in a thrilling and captivating manner. His story is of great interest to adults and also to the boys and girls who hang on his words spellbound. All those who are interested in the sufferings, hardships, victories and outlook for those who are doing God's work will enjoy hearing Dr. Tyson's addresses next Sunday."

A large church in Washington, D. C., had the following announcement in the daily papers:

"Rev. T. K. Tyson, known as the 'Old War Horse,' who has worn out several horses and carriages in his work in the West, and who is in great demand at the New York churches, will speak at the First Baptist Church tomorrow morning."

A large poster, reminding one of a Western

show bill, published by the Baptists of Attica, N. Y., has the following announcement:

“EXTRA IMPORTANT! Elder T. K. Tyson, Poet, Preacher, Editor, Humorist, Missionary, Cowboy, Lecturer, will speak in the Baptist Church Sunday, October 6, 10:45 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Subject of lecture for the evening, ‘A Soft Spot in the Head.’ Don’t fail to hear him. **SEATS ARE FREE.”**

We wish at this point to call attention to the fact that Brother Tyson’s lecture entitled, “A Soft Spot in the Head,” as announced above, was one of the most unique and humorous temperance speeches ever delivered in America. Its good, common sense and homely philosophy were simply irresistible. He delivered this lecture all over Oklahoma as well as in a vast number of places in practically every State in the North, the East and on the Pacific Coast. So far as we are aware nobody ever attempted to report it. The facts are that all his public utterances defied the efforts of a reporter. He had to be heard to be fully appreciated.

About the middle of October, 1907, he was transferred to the Lake District, with headquarters at 1291 Fourteenth Avenue, Detroit, Mich. Here he had a great deal of office as well as field work. He sent out thousands of letters and vast quantities of Home Mission literature. After he had been in

Detroit about a month, he wrote the following letter to *The Northwestern Baptist*:

“Right glad I am to communicate with the Baptist hosts of Northwestern Oklahoma through the columns of so bright a paper. No doubt many of my brethren feel that I owe them a letter and wonder why it does not come. You may be able to account for my failure to answer when I say that since coming to Detroit I have sent out about eight hundred letters, besides hundreds of packages of literature, and so my personal correspondence has necessarily been interrupted. During the month that we have been in our new district I have attended the Michigan and Ohio Baptist State Conventions and have spoken in a number of our prominent churches, thus getting acquainted with a large number of the leaders of our denominational work in this late Lake District. I find the Lord’s servants everywhere very much alike in their devotion to the Lord’s cause and their eagerness to hear of the experiences of their brethren on frontier fields. While I go here and there, speaking in large churches and occupying elegant ‘spare rooms,’ I do not forget the greater pleasure I have had in speaking to you in your school houses, sod and frame, and enjoying your hospitality in your limited quarters.”

We quote from another letter under date of December 26, 1907. He says:

"I fear I am too late to find a place in the January number of *The Northwestern Baptist*. I must plead a rush of appointments throughout Southern Michigan and also Southern Ohio, for the past four weeks, as my excuse for this delay. I returned from a nine-days visit to Dayton, Ohio, just in time to share my Christmas candy and other delicacies with the Tysons. In eight days I spoke fourteen times in Dayton, ten times among the churches of that city, twice at noon meetings for the laboring men, and twice at the Women's Christian Association building. My 'best girl' says this is too strenuous a gait to be kept up, and I suppose it will be the part of good judgment to slack up a little. Yet I feel impelled to reach as many churches as possible during the next three months, in order to do what I can in helping to meet the great demands of our Home Mission Society."

While Brother Tyson was universally received with open arms and enthusiastic appreciation by those large hearted and cultured Easterners, yet there is on record one or two amusing experiences which indicate that on very rare occasions he bumped into a program committee to whom he was a total stranger, and who did not share the general feeling of confidence in his abilities.

By the way, this reminds us that we have forgotten to state that Mr. Tyson appeared more like

a prosperous New York farmer than he did a city preacher, a fact which sometimes led innocent strangers to under-rate his gifts and powers as a speaker until experience taught them better. While Mr. Tyson was acting as secretary of the Lake District he attended for the first time the Ohio State Convention at Akron. Those in charge of arrangements did not like the looks of "that old codger from out West," and were not going to give him a place on the program. Brother Tyson went with his troubles to Dr. J. A. Francis, who was at that time General Evangelist, and who had forty-five minutes on the program. After hearing his grief Dr. Francis said he thought he could fix it all right by giving him fifteen minutes of his time. He saw the committee and they very reluctantly agreed to the arrangement, as Dr. Francis insisted. Dr. Francis afterward told this story with great delight and concluded by saying: "Tyson was the first to speak, and when he had spoken five minutes they did not care whether I ever spoke or not!"

We "clip" the following newspaper reports which speak eloquently, not only of the esteem in which he was held by the cultured people among whom he labored, but of his real merit and the high quality of his public efforts. Here is one:

"T. K. Tyson, with years and years of service to his credit, addressed a small gathering at the Bap-

tist Church. Those who knew he was to speak and remained away to escape being *bored*, made a great mistake and missed a treat. Mr. Tyson's talk is said to have excelled, in wit and human interest, most of the lecture course and chautauqua speeches." Another says: "The afternoon session opened with devotional services after which Rev. T. K. Tyson gave a fifteen-minute address on 'Home Missions.' Rev. Tyson was one of the powerful men present at the association, and having had experience on the Western plains is well acquainted with the subject on which he spoke. His address was full of information and was an appeal for additional aid." Here is another which says: "The attendants at the Baptist Church Sunday evening very much enjoyed the presence of a noted Western missionary who is for the present acting as a Home Mission District Secretary with headquarters at Detroit. He is Rev. T. K. Tyson, for many years a pioneer worker in the great Southwest, including Oklahoma. Mr. Tyson, though worn and gray, is yet a strong, vigorous man and speaker. His out of the ordinary address was full of incidents, graphic descriptions and humorous allusions yet replete with point and information. It afforded an inside view of frontier life and pioneer ways that made things vivid and real. The sod house, the missionary buck-board and ponies, the frame meeting house, the homely ways of kindly people, the Indians, the prairie, the changes, the

power of the Gospel, were moving pictures of speech. Mr. Tyson also spoke in the young people's meeting and held intent his later audience for more than an hour, without any wishing him to stop." And here is another deserving a place in our narrative:

"Responding to the report on Home Missions Rev. T. K. Tyson gave an address on the work of the Home Mission Society. He told of his experiences as a missionary in many places, chiefly in Oklahoma. The address defies the efforts of a reporter, but none who heard it can forget the rich humor of the narrative; the feeling of cheapness that we have done so little when this consecrated saint has done so much work and undergone so many hardships and thought nothing of it; and the inspiration that came to the heart of each one to go home and work in real earnest."

One of the happiest occasions to Brother Tyson while he served as the Society's secretary and special representative, was the meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention at Oklahoma City, in May, 1908. To him it was like getting back home again to be on Oklahoma soil and to look once more into the faces of some of his old friends. There was a most wonderful incident that occurred in that great meeting which none of us who witnessed it will be likely ever to forget. A large delegation of Christian Indians were present and took part in the services

by singing and testifying. Among them was Chief Left-Hand, against whom Brother Tyson had fought as a soldier in his younger days. This venerable old chief spoke at one of the meetings, and the scene which was enacted at the close of that talk was one of the most dramatic things ever witnessed by a large gathering of representative people. Glowing accounts of it appeared in scores of secular and denominational papers throughout the country. A writer in one of our great denominational weeklies very accurately described it as follows:

“The last talk was given by Chief Left-Hand of the Arapahoe tribe—a big fellow—tall, broad shouldered, with high forehead and projecting cheek bones and short hair. He is blind and has to be led about. He had his spectacles thrown up on his forehead like our old grandmothers. He was dressed in citizen’s clothes. He had a yellow bandanna tied loose around his neck and a white handkerchief hung in broad folds out of his breast pocket. On his feet he wore a pair of buff moccasins, beautifully embroidered around the edge. He was a striking figure. He is over seventy years old. He was converted eighteen months ago. He spoke in loud, guttural tones in his vernacular. Jesse Bent interpreted for him. No sooner had Chief Left-Hand ceased speaking than Rev. T. K. Tyson, of Michigan, who sat in the front pew directly behind my chair,

jumped to his feet and asked for the floor for a moment. His request was granted by the presiding officer. And then was enacted a scene never to be repeated, a dramatic incident of thrilling power. Mr. Tyson told how as a soldier he was ordered forty-four years ago to Oklahoma Territory to fight Indians who were on the war-path. One of the leaders on the Indian side in a hard fought battle was Chief Left-Hand. Mr. Tyson expressed a desire to shake hands with the blind old man as a Christian brother. Instantly he was called to the platform. Near the rear of the platform the two old fighters met face to face, not now as red handed enemies seeking each other's lives, but as brothers in Christ, with peace in their hearts. They clasped right hands; they put their left arms around each other's neck in a loving embrace; tears streamed down both their battle-scarred faces; their frames quivered with intense emotion. The hundreds of delegates and visitors rose to their feet; they went wild with enthusiasm; they clapped their hands; they cheered; they let fall unbidden, unchecked tears; they gave expression to their pent up feelings by singing with fervor the doxology, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.' It was an experience of a lifetime. Not often in religious gatherings does there come a dramatic climax such as this."

After the anniversary meetings at Oklahoma

City Brother Tyson visited the Northwestern Association for a short time and then returned to Detroit where he resumed his work. Some time in the latter part of the year 1909 he was transferred to the Southwest District where he served as assistant to Dr. Bruce Kinney for about six months, during which time he travelled and spoke almost continuously in Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, etc. From this district he was transferred to the Pacific Coast where he was associated with Dr. Alonzo M. Petty as assistant district secretary. He established his home and headquarters at Whittier, California. He was constantly traveling over the Pacific Coast States, speaking at associations, conventions and churches in the interest of Home Missions, everywhere creating great enthusiasm by his gospel of sunshine, his fine sense of humor, and by his thrilling accounts of personal pioneer missionary experience, just as he had previously done in the East. The people everywhere received him gladly, and he wrought well for God and the Home Mission Society.

From the many newspaper clippings we quote the following announcements:

“Rev. T. K. Tyson, the pioneer Baptist preacher of the Pacific Coast, will speak at the Baptist Church tonight. Rev. Tyson’s life has been one of adventure and experiences out of the ordinary, and he has a remarkable way of telling them—a rare min-

gling of humor, pathos and piety, and, withal, instructive and inspiring. A social hour will follow the lecture, at which time refreshments will be served to guests.”—(*Redding Courier*.) “T. K. Tyson, pioneer missionary, who led a division of the army in the war against the Crow Indians in the Dakotas, will arrive in this city today from the southern part of the State. He will lecture tonight at the Emmanuel Baptist Church on missionary work, and will deliver similar speeches in the First Baptist Church next Sunday morning, and in the Calvary Baptist Church Sunday night. He is an interesting speaker and all are invited to attend his lectures.”—(Sacramento, Calif.) While some of these newspaper notices are not absolutely correct in every instance yet they are a bit illuminating.

There is a little incident in the life of Brother Tyson while in the far West that is strikingly characteristic of the simple, child-like ways of this strong character, not only during these latter days, but all along his eventful career. The story is told as follows by Rev. James Gore (at that time a California pastor but now pastor of the First Baptist Church of Woodward, Oklahoma) :

“Brother Tyson was a benediction to my own life. I never can think of him without being stimulated and helped to better and nobler things. He spent nearly a week in our home about a month be-

fore his death. He was then representing the interests of the Home Mission Society on the Pacific Coast. His wholesome story-telling, ever clean and elevating, never failed to interest both old and young. It was during this visit that we organized the Central Baptist Association of California. We served our meals at the church. It was at one of the noon hours when Brother Tyson went off into the church and sat down and began singing a song of 'long ago.' Before he had finished we were all gathering about him to hear it. As soon as he had finished he told us if we wanted him to he would tell us a story; and so, in a most beautiful way, he told us a most charming plantation story of the Southland and wove into it many of the finer characteristics of the negro life of the South. Nearly every person in attendance at the Association had crowded around him before he finished, and it was with difficulty that we broke away from his story-telling to call the meeting together, to go on with the associational business."

Often during those long, strenuous trips up through Washington and Oregon and down through California, his thoughts wandered lovingly to the cozy little cottage in Whittier and to the uncrowned queen of that home—his "best girl." Among the last things he ever wrote was a beautiful poem in honor of her sixty-fourth birthday, entitled:

A BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE.

And so my bride is sixty-four today!
How fleet and sweet the years have passed away!
Those happy years seem not a dream to me,
But sweetly full of life's reality.

Yet strange it is, and somewhat like a dream,
When first we met, you but a girl did seem,
For twenty summers told the earthly life
Of her so soon to be my trusting wife.

Nor have we trod these fleeting years alone;
The loving God, who sits upon His Throne,
In condescending love has designed to send
A band of winsome children to attend
And cheer our way, and glorify the nest,
Where, cuddled close, we've found serenest rest.

Not always sunshine has He pleased to give,
Dark waters wait the feet of all who live;
But His sufficient grace has given rest
In the sweet thought, He doeth what is best.

When, chastened, we have cried, "Why is it so?"
He soothed and said, "Hereafter thou shalt know."
With hearts made strong we'll gladly follow on,
'Twill all be plain when this brief life is done.

So here's my hand, just as in sixty-nine;
My love, my strength, my service shall be thine,
For one so pure, so faithful and so true,
May call her own the best that I can do.

—*Thornton K. Tyson.*

To My Wife.

January 25, 1912.

A few months prior to this—August, 1911—a telegram announcing the sudden and unexpected death of a beloved daughter, Mrs. O. W. Cox, of Woodward, Oklahoma, had come to the Whittier home. Father and Mother Tyson were heartbroken at this sad news. Owing to the great distance, the intense heat of summer and the shock experienced upon receiving this news, Mrs. Tyson was unable to make the trip to Oklahoma, and so Brother Tyson came alone to be present at the funeral. Dear old servant of God! It was the last time the writer ever saw him. We shall never forget the heavenly smile at intervals breaking through his tears like sunshine through the clouds. We officiated at the funeral, one of the saddest yet sweetest experiences of our ministerial life. To behold this great loving father and strong Christian man among his many children and other relatives, under circumstances like this, was the most touching, and, at the same time, most heavenly scene we ever witnessed. His daughter had gone to heaven. He expected to see her again soon. While he mourned as only a great hearted man can, yet his face was as the face of an angel. Tenderly and comfortingly he spoke to each of his dear ones as they stood beside the beautiful casket in which sweetly rested their beloved dead. And the dear man, after the large congregation had dispersed, grasped us by the hand and with voice trembling with emotion thanked us for our

poor efforts at preaching a funeral discourse. In a few days he was at his work again on the Pacific Coast.

CHAPTER XI.

AT REST.

DURING the two years that Rev. Thornton K. Tyson and Rev. Alonzo M. Petty, D.D., were so closely associated in the work of the Home Mission Society in the Pacific District, a strong and most intimate friendship grew up between them. They were knit together like Jonathan and David, by the ties of brotherly love, and were almost as inseparable as the Siamese Twins. Both jolly, lovable Christian men and invincible workers, they made a remarkably efficient team. When they went after money during special Home Mission campaigns something invariably happened—*they got the cash*. Dr. Petty in his office in Los Angeles and Dr. Tyson in the field working in close co-operation made a combination hard for close-fisted contributors to resist. Dr. Petty wrote as follows:

My Dear Tyson: Your letters have reached me and I have been greatly pleased. You are not only shooting, but taking aim at the pocket book; a matter that wants to be done seriously at this time. You have heard of the man a little out of his head who was found discharging a shot gun repeatedly up in a big lone canyon. When asked what he was doing, he said: "Well, first, I am tearing a hole in

the air; second, I am firing at the devil; third, I may hit a raccoon."

Evidently you are not doing that kind of desultory firing at present. It is a good plan after you shoot to look beneath the smoke and see whether you hit the pocket book, and if you didn't take another crack at it.

A few days later Dr. Petty wrote again as follows:

My Dear Tyson: Your good letters keep rolling in on me and have all the encouragement that a sunny soul like yours can pour through itself upon a weary worn general. You are doing business with a big B and no mistake. If that nimble dollar doesn't land in your pocket it will not be because you are not giving it a thorough chasing. I am sending you, under separate cover, a letter that I wrote Brother Blank, hoping to get down beneath his vest and through some of the bristles that are evidently rising upon the back part of his neck. He roars pretty loud, but if you stand up and give him the right medicine he will eat out of your hand later. He is a good fellow, a bully good fellow, but he's like a cactus—you'll have to pluck the beauteous blossom out of a nest of thistles; only be careful and don't get them in the hand, and you will put a bouquet upon the Society's lapel, that it will be glad to wear, in the apportionment which that church is assigned. Be of good courage and as persistent as a mosquito on a river bank.

Now, a word about those pastors whose names you sent me. Do not forget to send me their addresses—their street addresses. A pastor's name in a big city without his street address is like the boy's definition of a parable—"It is a heavenly story in which there is no earthly meaning." By the way, I must give you a good story to jolly them up with, a brand new one that I heard the other day. A man left Maine for California; five days after his arrival he wrote

back: "I am ten years younger"; three months after, he wrote back, "I am twenty years younger"; two years later he wrote, "I am twenty-five years younger." Then he quit writing. Later, his friends came out and asked: "Where is Brown? He wrote back to us after he first came that he was ten years younger, and a little later that he was twenty years younger, and after a couple of years that he was twenty-five years younger, and then he stopped." "Why," said the man, "he's dead; haven't you heard that?" "No." "Oh, yes, he's dead; he died of cholera infantum."

Let us hear from you every day and keep things buzzing.

Yours always,

ALONZO M. PETTY.

During the sad bereavement referred to in the preceding chapter, a most beautiful letter of sympathy was received by Mr. and Mrs. Tyson from Dr. Petty. It is as follows:

Los Angeles, August 18th, 1911.

Dear Brother and Sister Tyson:

I am wondering today what you are doing and where you are; but whatever the task and wherever the location, I am sure your hearts are sore with grief over the loss of your beloved daughter—a loss that it would be impossible for you to bear, were it not for the assurance you have that she has been crowned with eternal life and that the mile stones of years are not many between yourselves and a reunion with her.

Of course, all the sacred things of her childhood and girlhood, her courtship and her wedding, her school days and her home days, and the days of her own home, are sweeping through your memory like angels with dripping wings and making sweet and sacred every moment. The memories of her dear life in all the dark days that are ahead, and

may their number be few, will live in your memories and your hearts like the perfume of summer roses in winter vases. God bless you both and give you grace to bear such a loss as this—so great a loss and so sudden a loss. Let us hear from you, and know always that you have our sincerest sympathy and most earnest prayers for you both.

Yours always,

ALONZO M. PETTY.

From about January 1 to 15, 1912, Rev. T. K. Tyson representing Home Missions and Dr. W. R. Manley, of McMinnville, Oregon, representing Foreign Missions, did some team work in the bounds of the Northern California State Convention. On the 6th both were to speak in the Baptist Church at Maxwell, California. They were lodged by Pastor Blood at a hotel. During the day Brother Tyson complained of a peculiar dizziness he was experiencing, and when meeting time came he was too unwell to speak. After the service Brother Blood insisted on keeping Brother Tyson at the parsonage for the night and called in a doctor to prescribe for him. The doctor told the pastor that Mr. Tyson's frequent dizzy spells were due to weak heart action and intimated that it was probably much more serious than the patient realized. But he rallied from this attack and during the rest of the tour was able to do his full part and seemed as well as usual at the close of the campaign.

With the intention of resting a few days he re-

turned to his home in Whittier, after parting company at Anderson with his friend and associate, Dr. Manley. On Thursday, February 29, he worked a little in his garden, but told his wife in the afternoon that he did not feel very well, complaining of some trouble in breathing. Later he seemed to be better. He retired that night feeling about as well as usual, except a slight indigestion to which he was subject. In the night—3 o'clock a. m., Friday, March 1—Mrs. Tyson heard him breathing loudly and laboriously, and then he was quiet. On going to his bedside she found that his spirit had taken its departure. Brother Tyson had gone to his reward. After sixty-seven years of toil and sacrifice he was at rest.

The news of his death was flashed over the wire to many friends and relatives throughout the country. The sad message came as a great shock to the thousands who knew and loved him. Scores of letters of condolence full of genuine sympathy and bearing beautiful tributes to the memory of the departed, came to console his grief-stricken companion. Among the first of these communications to arrive was one from the American Baptist Home Mission Society:

New York, March 1, 1912.

Mrs. T. K. Tyson,
Care of Rev. A. M. Petty,
Los Angeles, Calif.

My Dear Sister:

We were shocked to receive a telegram today from Dr. Petty, announcing the death of your husband and stating that he died suddenly of heart trouble. I hasten to send you my expression of sorrow over your great affliction. We have a keen sense of loss also, for we had learned to love him and admire him for his devotion to the work of the Lord. I am sure you will receive many messages of comfort and sympathy from the large circle of friends whom he made while in the service of the Society. He literally "fell at his post" in the Master's service. May the Lord comfort and sustain you in your great sorrow. My associates at the Rooms unite in sending sympathy.

Cordially yours,

H. L. MOREHOUSE,
Corresponding Secretary.

The following is from the corresponding secretary of the Oregon Baptist State Convention:

Portland, Oregon, March 6, '12.

Dear Mrs. Tyson:

While I have never met you I feel that I know you because of my fellowship with your good husband and his many happy references to you and his home. Therefore, I wish to send to you a message of sympathy in this hour of sorrow which is nevertheless through Christ an hour of the deepest joy. What a heritage you and the children have in the memory of such a man of God.

Sympathetically yours,

FRED C. W. PARKER.

These are but samples of the many beautiful expressions of love and sympathy that contributed so much comfort and cheer during those first lonely hours of bereavement.

Many of our denominational papers throughout the country contained numerous "appreciations" and extensive accounts of the home-going and funeral services of this veteran of the cross. We here quote in part from *The Pacific Baptist* of March 14, 1912:

"A great loss has been sustained, not only by the church at Whittier, Calif., but by Baptists at large throughout America, and especially on the Pacific Coast, by the death on March 1 of Rev. T. K. Tyson, Assistant Secretary of the Pacific District of the Home Mission Society. The funeral services were held in the Baptist Church at Whittier, where Brother Tyson was a member, on March 3. Rev. E. A. Main, pastor of the church, spoke of Brother Tyson's help as a member of the local church. Rev. J. F. Watson, General Missionary of the State Convention, spoke on behalf of the Baptists of California, and said in part that Brother Tyson was the greatest pioneer missionary that he had ever known. Rev. N. B. Rairden said he had known Brother Tyson since 1882 and had been in active service with him for twenty years. He said that Brother Tyson was the happiest man he ever knew and a transparent character. Dr. Alonzo

M. Petty spoke very feelingly and said that the most fitting epitaph for Brother Tyson would be, 'It was easier to be good when he was near.' Dr. C. A. Woody spoke for the executive board of the American Baptist Home Mission Society." The *Standard* (Chicago) elaborated on this somewhat as follows: "The funeral services were conducted by Dr. E. A. Main, pastor of the Whittier Church, assisted by former pastor, Dr. G. S. Williams, superintendent of Home Missions; Dr. C. A. Woody, Dr. N. B. Rairden, one time superintendent of Home Missions in the Mississippi Valley; Rev. J. F. Watson, corresponding secretary of the Southern California Baptist State Convention; Alonzo M. Petty, Home Mission district secretary for the Pacific Coast. Doctor Woody gave the principal address. The brethren already named also paid feeling tributes to his worth as a man, the sweetness of his fellowship, and his long useful services to the Lord and the denomination. His transparency of character, his goodness of heart, his faithfulness in friendship, his wisdom in service, his patient, gentle, loving kindness to all with whom he associated and worked; his indomitable will and indefatigable efforts for the spread of the Gospel; the noble Christian family that he had reared; his long and happy married life and continued sweetheart devotion to his wife up to his death; his gentleness in the home—all of these, and

more, were referred to in the heartfelt testimonies that were given to his life and character"

From *The Standard*, issue of March 30, 1912, we quote the following Appreciation:

The world seems lonelier to our little family somehow since the news reached us that dear old "Father Tyson" had left it. His was one of those rare natures of the genial, thoughtful, tender sort who bind themselves with cords of love to those who know them and make a precious contribution to the sum total of human friendship. The suddenness of his departure took us with a shock. We expected him to go like a warrior from the battle-front, but we had talked it over after his last visit with us and had agreed that there were years of work in him yet. He came to our home January 7, 1912, after a meeting in Maxwell, and told us of the attack of indigestion that had come to him there. We made him as comfortable as possible and were glad that the threatening weather made it necessary for his engagement to speak at a neighboring church to be cancelled. We had a pleasant time talking with him about olden days back in old Detroit and Michigan. We talked, too, about the future, and he told us of the long-made plans to retire and spend his last years at his newly acquired home in California. He was happy in the thought of the little farm, and he was proud that it was located in as good and beautiful a town as Whittier. Still he had fears that he never would enjoy many days of rest, for the denomination seemed to need his labors and Doctor Morehouse was reluctant to release him. But now God has released him, and he will have his rest, for "there remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God." He was always spoken of and greeted as "Father Tyson," in our home, even by the little tots, and he seemed

to take pleasure in the appellation, so as "Father Tyson," we shall always remember him.

FRED I. DREXLER.

Willows, Calif.

We will also give space to the following Appreciation published in *The Pacific Baptist* March 21, 1912:

I met Brother Tyson for the first time about a year ago. His abounding good spirits and his hearty geniality, were an inspiration to me, while his fund of humor and his droll way of putting things, made it impossible to be gloomy where he was. Dear Brother Tyson! I have rarely become so much attached to a man in so short a time. He and I represented our two societies at most of the associations of Oregon and Western Washington last summer, and when I was told that, in carrying out the decision of the Convention of Northern California some team work should be done, Brother Tyson had chosen me to go along as the representative of foreign missions, I was very much pleased. The experiences of those days together in the Sacramento Valley Association gave me an opportunity to know him still better and to become more than ever attached to him. And now he is gone the world seems poorer, though it certainly is better for his having lived in it. I feel certain, too, that the manner of his going was exactly such as he would have chosen, if it had been left to him. Of him it may be truly said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord . . . for their works follow them."

W. R. MANLEY.

Memorial services were held in various places where Brother Tyson had labored, particularly in

Northwestern Oklahoma where he had been a missionary for so many years.

We now conclude this little memorial volume which has been written with the consciousness that his precious memory can have no better or more enduring monument than the beautiful life that he lived. His work among us is monumental and will stand sacred to his memory not only during the present generation but for generations to come. Though his happy spirit is in the glory world, yet he abides with us still in the lives he has blessed, in the churches he has organized, in the homes he entered with his benediction and in the souls he won to Jesus Christ.

THE END.

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